



**THE SCHOOL AS A CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SITE IN AN ERA OF  
CURRICULUM CHANGE**

by

**VUSUMUZI PRAISEGOD KHUMALO**

Submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

**MASTER OF EDUCATION – WITH SPECIALISATION IN CURRICULUM  
STUDIES**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SUPERVISOR: PROF. M J TAOLE**

**JUNE 2014**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My sincerest gratitude to:

1. The Almighty God in Three Persons, for giving me a second chance.
2. My Supervisor, Prof. M J Taole, for her insight, patience and guidance throughout this project.
3. My Wife, Ntombenhle Khumalo, for her encouragement and support.
4. Dr V T Zulu for being a father figure in my life.
5. My Mother, Mrs N R Zulu, for expecting the best in me.
6. My daughter, Londeka, for not giving up on life, despite challenges.
7. My colleague, Abdulai-Bin Adams, for his meticulous IT input on this document.
8. My editor, Liza Marx from AQdemic Editing Services for her input.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to the WORD of God. The WORD has been a source of inspiration and intrigue to me since 2000.

*“I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all” Ecclesiastes 9 v 11.*

## DECLARATION

I declare that: **The school as a curriculum management site in an era of curriculum change** is my work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature.....

Date.....

Mr V P Khumalo

## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the actions, roles and beliefs of curriculum leaders and managers as they work to secure improvements in curriculum delivery and in managing curriculum change, using the context of an academically successful rural secondary school as a case study. This study acknowledges that curriculum reforms are far from over in South African education scape and that these reforms are unlikely to neglect the school as a curriculum management site. The rationales of this study are threefold. First, in view of the challenges facing curriculum managers at school level, as well as the questionability of the school managements' capacity to mediate the curriculum, there is a need for empirical investigation as to how successful rural schools manage the curriculum effectively. Secondly, to gain a greater understanding how school leaders might influence curriculum delivery through effective instructional leadership. Thirdly, given that South African principals have little experience of instructional leadership and managing, teaching and learning is one of the core modules in the new qualification for school principals, this study aims to contribute case study evidence in this field.

This study was conducted within two research paradigms. Firstly, this study assumes that in a school setting there are key participants who are informative about the research foci. These participants have something important to say about curriculum management processes, curriculum change and instructional leadership. This assumption is located within phenomenology. Secondly, symbolic interaction is another conceptual paradigm in that curriculum management is studied as a complex process requiring interaction among role players.

Findings indicated that the principal impacts positively on teaching and learning if he focuses on instructional leadership. Secondly, the effective use of regular meetings is essential in order to clarify the vision and build an organization and culture where teaching and learning flourish. Thirdly, curriculum managers are directly involved in curriculum management, albeit at different angles. Fourthly, the capacity of the School Management Team (SMT) needs to be strengthened through use of innovative practices and lastly, the principal needs to be a proactive leader who observes and takes ownership of curriculum changes.

## **KEY TERMS**

Curriculum, curriculum innovations, instructional leadership, school management team

## TABLE OF CONTEXT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
DECLARATION .....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
KEY TERMS .....	v
TABLE OF CONTEXT .....	vi
ANNEXURES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
LIST OF TABLES .....	xiii
CHAPTER 1: .....	1
THE SCHOOL AS A CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SITE IN AN ERA OF CURRICULUM CHANGE .....	1
1.1    Introduction .....	1
1.2    Motivation .....	3
1.3    Research problem .....	5
1.4    Research aims .....	6
1.5    Research methodology .....	6
1.5.1    Research design .....	7
1.5.2    Purposeful sampling .....	7
1.5.3    Data collection .....	8
1.5.4    Data analysis .....	9
1.5.5    Validity .....	9
1.6    Research ethics .....	9
1.7    Limitations for the study .....	10
1.8    Chapter division .....	10
1.9    Definition of Terms .....	11
CHAPTER 2: .....	12
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	12
2.1    Introduction .....	12
2.2    Background to curriculum management in South Africa's post-apartheid curriculum	12

2.3	Curriculum theory .....	15
2.3.1	Introduction.....	15
2.3.2	Metaphors and theoretical camp .....	16
2.4	The institutionalisation of curriculum changes .....	21
2.5	Instructional leadership .....	26
2.5.1	Instructional leadership behaviours .....	27
2.5.2	A model for instructional leadership.....	28
2.5.2.1	Structural support .....	32
2.5.3	Distributed leadership .....	33
2.5.3.1	A useful perspective on distributed leadership.....	34
2.5.4	Curriculum management structures at school level .....	35
2.5.4.1	The role of senior curriculum managers.....	36
	Having a view of the whole curriculum .....	37
	Accountability for consistently high standards .....	37
	Managing structures .....	38
	Developing an appropriate culture .....	38
	Managing the involvement of staff in curriculum management .....	39
2.5.4.2	The role of curriculum middle managers .....	39
2.5.4.3	The role of junior curriculum managers .....	40
2.5.4.4	How do school management teams in well-performing schools manage the curriculum? .....	40
2.6	Empirical evidence and a need for further research.....	41
2.7	Conclusion.....	42
CHAPTER 3: .....		45
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....		45
3.1	Introduction .....	45
3.2	Qualitative research methodology.....	45
3.3	Theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research .....	47
3.3.1	Phenomenological approach .....	48
3.3.2	Symbolic interaction .....	49
3.4	Research design.....	50
3.4.1	Case study design.....	51



3.4.2	Site selection .....	52
3.4.2.1	The context of the case study school .....	52
3.4.2.2	Profile of the case study school .....	54
3.4.2.3	Teaching and learning at the case study school.....	56
3.4.2.4	Curriculum management structure .....	57
3.5	Selection of participants .....	57
3.5.1	Profile of participants.....	58
3.6	Data collection strategies .....	59
3.6.1	Data collection instruments.....	60
3.6.1.1	Semi-structured interviews .....	60
3.6.1.2	Study of written documents.....	62
	Personal Documents .....	62
	Official Documents .....	63
	Objects.....	63
3.6.1.3	Participant observation .....	63
3.7	Data analysis .....	64
3.7.1	Document analysis .....	65
3.8	Validity in qualitative research .....	65
3.8.1	Triangulation.....	65
3.8.2	Thick descriptions .....	66
3.8.3	Low inference descriptors.....	66
3.9	Ethical issues in qualitative research.....	66
3.9.1	Informed consent .....	66
3.9.2	Confidentiality and right to privacy.....	67
3.9.3	Deception of respondents.....	67
3.9.4	Mechanically recorded data .....	68
3.10	Conclusion.....	68
CHAPTER 4: .....		69
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION .....		69
4.1	Introduction .....	69
4.2	Interview data.....	69
4.2.1	Analysis of interview data .....	69

4.2.2	Themes from the interview data .....	70
4.3	Analysis of written documents .....	71
4.4	Observational data .....	72
4.4.1	Observation of meetings .....	72
4.5	Theme 1: Instructional leadership behaviour .....	73
4.5.1	Teamwork .....	73
4.5.2	Effective communication .....	74
	School vision and mission .....	75
	School year plan .....	75
4.5.3	Supportive work environment .....	76
4.5.4	Mentorship .....	77
4.6	Theme 2: Empowerment .....	78
4.6.1	Distributed leadership .....	78
4.6.2	Regular meetings .....	81
4.6.3	Power relationships .....	82
4.6.4	Focus on vision and inspiring subordinates .....	83
4.6.5	Shared decision making .....	85
4.6.6	Conclusion .....	86
4.7	Theme 3: Curriculum management roles .....	86
4.7.1	Curriculum management objectives .....	87
4.7.2	A view of the whole curriculum .....	89
4.7.3	Executive roles .....	90
	Programme of assessment .....	91
	Attendance registers .....	91
	A schedule of class visits .....	91
	IQMS Files .....	92
	A plan to control teaching and learning .....	92
	Departmental policies .....	92
	Curriculum coverage .....	92
4.7.4	Supportive roles .....	93
4.7.5	Conclusion .....	94
4.8	Theme 4: Curriculum change intervention .....	94

4.9	Theme 5: Barriers to effective curriculum management.....	98
4.10	Conclusion.....	100
CHAPTER 5: .....		101
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION .....		101
2.6	Introduction .....	101
2.7	Overview of the study .....	101
2.8	Summary of results.....	102
2	5.4 Research findings in relation to the research questions .....	103
5.4.1	What is the instructional leadership role of the principal? .....	103
	Finding Number 1: The principal is responsible for casting the vision of the whole school .....	103
	Finding number 2: The principal influences curriculum delivery through empowerment .....	105
	Finding number 3: The principal co-ordinates curriculum delivery through regular meetings .....	106
	Finding number 4: The principal protects instructional time and increases learning opportunities.....	107
5.4.2	What is the curriculum management role of the SMT?.....	108
	Finding number 5: Curriculum managers fulfil different roles.....	108
5.4.3	How does school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management? .....	110
	Finding number 6: The capacity of the SMT needs to be enhanced beyond traditional curriculum management structure .....	110
5.4.4	How does the SMT ensure teachers' involvement in curriculum change?.....	111
	Finding number 7: School managers should observe and take ownership of curriculum changes .....	111
	Finding number 8: Reflections and collaboration needs to be planned and scheduled by curriculum managers .....	112
	Finding number 9: The intervention of the Department of Education in matters of curriculum change management is not well co-ordinated.....	112
5.5	How does the SMT at Lighthouse school leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change? .....	113
5.5.1	The principal .....	113
5.5.2	The HODs .....	114

5.5.3	The subject heads .....	115
5.5.4	The School's organisation and culture .....	116
5.6	Conclusion.....	116
5.7	Suggestions for future research .....	117
5.8	Recommendations .....	117
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....		119
6	Annexure A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS.....	125
7	Annexure B: Letter of Consent to the principal.....	126
8	Annexure C: Letter of Consent to the Departmental Head.....	128
9	Annexure D: Letter of consent to the subject head.....	130
10	Annexure E: Interview Guide for the principal.....	132
11	Annexure F: Interview Guide for Departmental heads .....	134
12	Annexure G: Interview guide for subject heads.....	136
13	.....	136
14	Annexure H: Observation Tool .....	137
15	Annexure I: Interview Transcript - principal .....	139
16	Annexure J: Interview Transcript for HOD .....	147
17	Annexure K: Interview Transcript for subject heads .....	154

## **ANNEXURES**

A: Permission to conduct research in the KZN institutions

B: Letter of consent for the principal

C: Letter of consent for the departmental head

D: Letter of consent for the subject head

E: Interview guide for the school principal

F: Interview guide for the departmental head

G: Interview guide for the subject head

H: Observation Schedule

I: Interview transcript for the principal

J: Interview transcript for the departmental head

K: Interview transcript for the subject head

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Elements of Murphy and Hallinger Model of Instructional Leadership.....	30
Table 2: Elements of Murphy's model of Instructional Leadership .....	30
Table 3: Elements of weber's Model of Instructional leadership .....	31
Table 4: Overview of themes and categories .....	70

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Lighthouse School's Matric Results 2008-2011 .....	53
Figure 2: Quintile and aunding allocation .....	55
Figure 3: Curriculum Management Structure - Lighthouse school .....	57

## **CHAPTER 1: THE SCHOOL AS A CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SITE IN AN ERA OF CURRICULUM CHANGE**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Curriculum reforms are far from over in the South African education scape. The Ministry of Basic Education is currently implementing the recommendations of the Ministerial Review Committee of 2009, which indicates more curriculum reforms. On July 2010, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, issued a public statement in which she warned all stakeholders about the ‘long road’ ahead, which necessitates that we ‘work against change fatigue in order to build confidence and enthusiasm amongst all our stakeholders’ (Motshekga, 2010).

Since the post-apartheid Curriculum 2005 was introduced in 1998, the ‘dust has never settled’ in the area of curriculum policy. A brief summary of milestones in South Africa’s curriculum reforms confirms the above statement. Immediately after the Council of Education Ministers approved Curriculum 2005 as policy on 29 September 1997, educationists divided on the outcomes based education principle (Jansen, 1998). Curriculum 2005 was implemented in 1998 amidst fundamental differences on the outcomes based education principle. Reports of its flawed implementation flooded curriculum literature (Christie, 1999), and as a result of the cascade training model adopted by the Department of Education inadequate training of teachers (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). By early 2000, complaints that emerged from schools was mainly children were unable to read, write and count at an appropriate Grade level (DoE, 2009).

The minister of education at that stage, the late Dr Kader Asmal, appointed a review committee in 2000. The recommendation of this review committee was that the curriculum be revised and efficient to account for its design flaws (DoE, 2000). The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) was marketed as a revision, not a new curriculum and as such there was no detailed implementation plan, a flaw that was identified by a later review committee of 2009 (DoE, 2009). Public outcry over dismal pass rates and poor achievements in numeracy and literacy has once more led to the current revision on the NCS (Pretoria News, 2008). The current review committee has accented that ‘the hindrance to achieving a



curriculum that bestows authority on teachers' understanding of their mandate in the classroom, is not found in curriculum documents alone. Impediments to a good curriculum also arise from its implementation' (DoE, 2009). This view expressed by the review committee is a hint that the on-going curriculum reforms will not neglect the school, which is after all an implementation site.

This provides as an overview in an attempt to show that curriculum policy in S.A. and has been unstable over the past decade. Given the top-down nature of curriculum reforms, it can be concluded that the role of the school as a curriculum management site has also been unstable. The review committee (DoE, 2009) has also admitted that policy changes alone will not bring about successful teaching and learning. Efforts must also focus on implementation. The current review committee, in the spirit of transparency, invited all the stakeholders to participate in the review process through interviews, hearings and written submissions. One crucial aspect that emerged from the hearings was the school management's capacity to mediate the curriculum (DoE, 2009:58).

The capacity of schools to mediate the curriculum is indeed questionable. In a School Management Team (SMT) workshop, that was attended by the researcher, at Nongoma circuit SMT Workshop (10 March 2010), the Chief Education Specialist for the GET phase shared some disturbing truths about the state of curriculum management in Vryheid district:

- School principals seem to detach themselves from issues of curriculum management. This observation is supported by countrywide research. When school principals were asked to rate their leadership activities in the order of their importance, managing teaching and learning was ranked only seventh out of 10 leadership activities (Bush & Hystek, 2006: 68).
- In most schools, there are simply no systems in place for the effective management of the curriculum. This observation is supported in a study conducted by Bush, *et al.* (2009: 06) in which the capability to develop, sustain, and monitor teaching and learning effectively was found to be generally lacking in eight of the case study schools.

- principals do not monitor the activities of the Head of Departments (HOD) to ensure that curriculum meetings (Makhathini : 2010).

In view of these challenges, this study aims to investigate the role of the school as a curriculum management site, in the context of an academically successful rural school. It is contended that traditional curriculum management, which is characterised by checklists and ‘box ticking’, need to give way to innovative curriculum leadership. This study will investigate the activities of the SMT, which constitute curriculum management, as well as the involvement of educators in curriculum innovations.

## **1.2 Motivation**

Curriculum management embraces planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (DoE, 2008). Curriculum management is about managing systems and procedures as well as people to ensure successful learning and teaching and to promote increasing levels of learner achievement (DoE, 2009: 15). Curriculum management is similarly referred to in literature as instructional leadership (Graczewski, Knudson & Holtsman, 2009; Hoadley, Christie & Ward, 2009). Bush (2005) conducted a systematic review of the literature on school management in South Africa and found very few sources on this topic and none whatsoever that were based on empirical work. Hoadley (2007) and Moloi (2007:463) further stressed this challenge of limited literature.

Hoadley *et al.*, conducted a large scale study, the first of its kind aimed at gathering information on how curriculum is managed across different types of South African secondary schools and to identify the key dimensions of the curriculum that affect student achievement outcomes (Hoadley *et al.*, 2009: 374).

This study identified key management variables that are important for management of curriculum to be effective in schools. These management variables are regulation of time, monitoring and support for planning delivery in relation to curriculum coverage, the procurement and management of books and stationery, and the quality of tests and monitoring of results. These variables from different studies were collected but are all cited in Hoadley *et al.* (2009: 375). The said management variables as a framework for collecting case study evidence in this study, will be used.

In a study conducted by Labane (2009), investigating the planning and management of curriculum implementation, she concluded that in order for the curriculum to be implemented successfully, the management of the curriculum needs to improve. In a similar study, Shoba (2009) focused on the role of school management in curriculum management. She found that traditional management roles hamper the effective management of the curriculum by obstructing collaboration (Shoba, 2009: 62).

This study also investigated the roles of the SMT in curriculum management, whilst it is different from the above studies, in that the whole school will be connected to curriculum management. Curriculum managers leading the change within the school need to fully understand not only their roles, but also the spirit and intention of the change (Buchanan, 2008: 41). For that reason, this study aims to investigate how curriculum managers promote teachers' connectedness to the curriculum.

This study also fulfilled the researcher's own quest as a curriculum manager. It has been observed that curriculum innovations fail at institutional level because of lack of leadership. Curriculum managers rarely translate the spirit and intention of the innovation to educators. Such innovations are done for the sake of compliance. For example, the Programme of Assessment; teachers do it reluctantly and never consult it in future because they do not know its intention.

In many schools, curriculum managers are excellent as teachers but very poor as mentors. From the researchers' experience, working as a middle manager in a rural school, rural schools in particular with a shortage of qualified teachers are challenged. Most teachers join schools with no professional training whatsoever, their knowledge of the curriculum is framed only by their own experiences as learners. This gap in training coupled with the high turnover of educators in rural areas is an additional burden on curriculum managers. Curriculum managers cannot afford to check files alone without providing valuable guidance to novice teachers in curriculum matters.

The rationale for this study is as follows:

- To conceptualise the building blocks of effective curriculum management through case study evidence of an academically successful rural school.
- To gain a greater understanding of how school leadership might influence curriculum delivery to the ultimate contribution to student achievement.
- Given that South African principals have little experience of instructional leadership (Hoadley, et al. 2007: 03), and managing teaching and learning is one of the core modules in the new qualification for school principals, this study aims to contribute case study evidence in this field.

### **1.3 Research problem**

The research is concerned about the ineffectiveness of schools to mediate the curriculum. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how selected academically successful rural school manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change.

This problem has culminated into the following research question:

- How does a selected academically, successful rural secondary school, leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change?

This is the main research question that guided this inquiry and has been sub-divided into the following sub-questions:

- What is the instructional leadership role of the principal?
- What is the curriculum management role of the SMT?
- How do a school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management?

- How does the SMT ensure teachers' involvement in curriculum change?

#### **1.4 Research aims**

The aim of this study is to investigate how a selected, academically successful, rural school leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change. This aim has been sub-divided into the following sub-aims:

- To investigate the instructional leadership role of the school principal.
- To document the collective curriculum management functions of the SMT.
- To investigate methods the school uses for organisation and culture to contribute to effective curriculum management.
- To investigate techniques of ensuring that teachers stay involved in curriculum change.

#### **1.5 Research methodology**

A qualitative method for this study has been chosen. A qualitative approach describes and analyses peoples' individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006:315).

- Qualitative research focuses on studying phenomena that occur in natural settings and involve studying them in all their complexity (Leedy & Ormod, 2005: 133).
- Qualitative methods allow the researcher to be subjective and offer valuable interpretations of what he or she sees in social settings (Leedy & Ormod, 2005: 133; Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006:316). Experience as a curriculum middle manager at school level is invaluable in this regard.
- This study seeks to interpret and define concepts that are important in managing the curriculum as little information about how schools manage the curriculum in South Africa is held (Hoadley et al., 2009: 375).

The constantly changing curriculum means that new concepts will emerge in the management of the curriculum at school level. The indication of an emergent design, which is inherent in qualitative research, is greatly cherished. An emergent design allowed for the evolution of research methods during the course of this study. Such feature is necessary because curriculum management is a complex phenomenon.

### **1.5.1 Research design**

This study followed a case study design. In a case study design data collection and analysis focuses on one phenomenon, which the research is aiming at (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). A case study is suitable for learning more about a little known or poorly understood situation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 135). In this study, the case is a typical case of one academically successful rural secondary school. The reason for choosing an ‘academically successful’ secondary school is that the study aims to document sound practices. The study assumes that sound curriculum management practices lead to better than expected student gains. This study measured academic success in terms of the sustained improvement in the Grade 12 results since 2008, the first group of learners to write the national senior certificate having learned the new curriculum.

### **1.5.2 Purposeful sampling**

Purposeful, non-random sampling was used to ‘select information rich cases for study in depth (Pollon, cited in Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 319). Site selection involved selecting a site with the following attributes:

- Using a rural secondary school from Vryheid District.
- Showing a consistent improvement in Grade 12 results since 2008.
- A school, whose headship has not changed since 2008 (this attribute will account for consistency of leadership)

Although comprehensive sampling, in which every participant, group, setting, event or other relevant information is examined, is a preferred sampling strategy (Macmillan & Schumacher: 2006: 309). The large size of the population and the resources constraints require purposeful sampling. It is expected that a large number of sites will conform to the above attributes. Final selection was based on convenience to the researcher and ease of access. A single site study has been opted for because of time constraints and the fact that the research question can be adequately answered by studying a single case.

### **1.5.3 Data collection**

Foreshadowed problems indicate the focus for data collection. Foreshadowed problems are typically broad phrased research questions about the participants (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 341). This study aims to investigate how selected, academic successful, rural secondary schools manage the curriculum in an era of change.

Data collection focused on the school as a curriculum management site and included the following:

- **Observations:** observations focused on how the school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management.
- **Document analysis:** relevant documents include minutes of the SMT meetings as well as other relevant curriculum management structures. The focus is on identifying the main role players in curriculum management and the manner in which top-down curriculum changes are communicated to the school community.
- **Semi-structured interviews:** interviews were conducted with the participants to discover facts, motives, participants' beliefs and perspectives, and why participants think engaging in a particular behaviour is desirable. These motives are some of those suggested by Leedy & Ormrod, (2005: 146).

#### **1.5.4 Data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among categories (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 364). Schram (2003), cited in Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 150), expresses the idea of qualitative data analysis succinctly as a process of more than gathering ‘facts’ about ‘what happened’ rather as engagement with data. A qualitative researcher interprets data by noting some things as significant and others as insignificant. In the light of the above, predetermined codes were preferred because of the researcher’s role as an interpreter and his knowledge gathered from the literature study, and experience, will render suitable interpretation. In qualitative research, new codes may emerge from data because of the emergent design. A relevant computer database will be used to store and sort data quickly.

#### **1.5.5 Validity**

Validity in qualitative research is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the researcher and the participants (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 324).

The use of multiple data collection instruments like observation instrument, document analysis and interview guide, enhanced validity and achieved triangulation of findings. Cross validation between participants’ meanings at management level was made with their subordinates to find regularities in data. Lastly, permission was sought to use a tape recorder during in-depth interviews.

#### **1.6 Research ethics**

Qualitative research is more likely to be personally intrusive than quantitative research (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 333) and as such ethical dilemmas should be averted. The following procedures will be followed in order to overcome ethical dilemmas:

- A letter seeking permission to conduct the study was addressed to the DoE.



- Upon receipt of informed consent, the research proposal was presented to the selected Ward Manager, explaining its aims and potential benefits to the ward and the circuit as a whole. A request to be introduced formally to the management of the selected school was made.
- In an introductory meeting, the school management was addressed on issues of ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of both the school and all the participants.
- All participants received a consent letter.
- The researcher used his human relations skills in the first week to gain the confidences of the SMT and all educators.

### **1.7 Limitations for the study**

In line with all qualitative case study designs, the results of this study cannot be generalised to different contexts. This limitation is exacerbated by the fact that it is a single case study.

### **1.8 Chapter division**

The research report is presented in five chapters as follows:

- Chapter One: Orientation
- Chapter Two: Literature review
- Chapter Three: Research methodology
- Chapter Four: Data analysis and interpretation
- Chapter Five: Summary, conclusion and recommendations

## 1.9 Definition of Terms

- **Curriculum:** All opportunities for learning provided by a school, including climate of relationships, attitudes, style of behaviour, and the general quality of life established by a school (adapted from the former Department of Education and science for England and Wales).
- **Curriculum innovations:** Top-down curriculum changes aimed at improving teaching and learning.
- **Instructional leadership:** A series of leadership behaviours by the senior curriculum manager (the principal that aiming at affecting classroom instruction).
- **School assessment team:** A school committee responsible for school based assessment.
- **School management team:** Varies according to the size of the school, usually is formed by the principal, deputy principal and heads of departments.
- **School development team:** A school committee charged with the development of educators.
- **School based support team:** School committee responsible for school based curriculum development.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

In this literature review, a brief background of curriculum management in South Africa, assuming from the post-apartheid curriculum era to the current curriculum reforms will be provided. This is followed by a review of the literature on curriculum theory because an understanding of theoretical underpinnings of the curriculum is indispensable to those responsible for managing and developing it (Frame, 2003: 17).

Four other areas are deemed relevant to this study and have been reviewed as such, these are:

- The institutionalisation of curriculum changes, because change has been a permanent feature of our curriculum since 1994.
- Instructional leadership because in most international studies (e.g. Leithwood *et al.*, cited in Bush, *et al.*, 2009: 01) it is used synonymously with curriculum management. The Department of Education regards instructional leadership as the principal's connection to the classroom (DoE, 2009: 17).
- Curriculum management structures at school level.
- Examining empirical evidence on the management of the curriculum at academically effective schools.

### 2.2 Background to curriculum management in South Africa's post-apartheid curriculum

The post-apartheid curriculum 2005 was an ambitious project in an area of education policy in South Africa. It ushered in an era of outcomes based education, a true innovation. This innovation meant radical change in the way curriculum was managed in South African schools (Jansen, 2003: 35). During the apartheid era curriculum management was synonymous with compliance management.

This view is held by Jansen & Middlewood (2003) in their analysis of the traditional management of the curriculum in S.A. During the apartheid era curriculum management was defined as a system of following rules and knowing the answers so that the managers can make sure that teachers are doing what they are supposed to do (Frame, 2003: 24). The post-apartheid curriculum brought fundamental changes in that a number of developmental works was required to be done at school level (Hoadley, 2009:374). This era saw curriculum management redefined as ‘managing systems and procedures as well as people to ensure successful learning and teaching and to promote increasing levels of learner achievement in a school’ (DoE, 2009).

This study will, in the spirit of the above definition define curriculum management as the process of leading and managing curriculum delivery at school level. In this context, curriculum management is about enabling schools to create efficient systems and procedures as well as empower people to deliver the curriculum for learner achievement. This view is in line with international trends, notably in a country like Hong Kong, where curriculum reforms have been the order of the day, (Tam, 2010: 367) accents that school level interventions are critical for bringing about curriculum changes.

The most notably change in the management of the curriculum, since the implementation of Curriculum 2005, is the notion of distributed leadership (Hoadley, 2009: 377). Spillane (2004) cited in Hoadley (2009: 377) asserts that ‘leadership is a property of a number of actors at school level, and is not invested in the principal solely’. This assertion is important for this study because it seeks to investigate a number of roles and situations, which include the organisational structures and culture prevailing at schools that have a bearing on the effective management of the curriculum.

In reviewing the historical background to curriculum management, it is important to review how the definition of curriculum has changed over the years. In so doing, the concept of paradigms and paradigm shift comes to the fore. During the apartheid era curriculum was defined as a plan for teaching, a ‘path’ to be run or most commonly as a syllabus. Frame (2003) provides a useful analysis of theorising curriculum by outlining broad approaches or paradigms.

A paradigm is a mind-set whereas paradigm shift refers to the shifting of mind-set. Frame (2003: 17) argues that those engaged with managing the curriculum need an understanding of theoretical framework in order to avoid relying on common sense. Frame (2003) proceeds to explain the three paradigms, which guide curriculum inquiry; the technical paradigm, the practical paradigm and the emancipating paradigm. She acknowledges these as drawn from the Haberman theory of knowledge-constitutive interest (Frame, 2003: 18).

The technical paradigm understands curriculum as an 'ordered set of interacting systems operating according to discernible and universal patterns or laws' (Frame, 2003: 19). Simply put, this paradigm assumes a set of beliefs that inputs can be used to manipulate predetermined outputs. The outcomes based education approach was a hybrid methodology in that it contained elements from both the technical and practical paradigm.

This theoretical background relates to this study as it allows us to identify certain characteristics and behaviours of those managing the curriculum in this paradigm. Frame (2003: 24) states that those managing the curriculum in this paradigm will rely heavily on understanding curriculum documents (subject policy statements, assessment guidelines and directives from the department above). Their concern is to ensure that such directives are communicated to the staff and implemented as such.

The practical paradigm practitioner assumes that reality is a product of human interpretation (Frame, 2003: 24). Frame also states that in the practical paradigm 'knowledge is produced through processes involving human judgement and the development of consensual meaning'. As stated previously, the outcomes based approach required that a number of developmental works be done at school level to account for different teaching and learning context. This innovation appears to be in line with the practical paradigm. A curriculum manager influenced by this paradigm is likely to prioritise managing people and process (Frame, 2003: 26; DoE 2009).

The emancipating or critical paradigm rests on the premise that the curriculum is a political project. It has its roots in Freire's Pedagogy of the oppressed. Paulo Freire, an educationist of Brazilian origin, developed pedagogy for teaching adult illiterates who were facing poverty and oppression. In this pedagogy Paulo attempts to emancipate his adult learners by encouraging them to be critical, inquisitive and to achieve critical awareness of the conditions they are faced with, Freire (1996). The emancipating paradigm, in the spirit of Freire, criticises a highly prescriptive curriculum, authoritarian teacher-pupil models and propagates learning, based on the actual experiences of the learners.

The National Curriculum is currently undergoing major streamlining as recommended by the Review Committee of 2009 (DoE, 2009). Classifying it as under this or that paradigm is not a simple matter. It is technical in that content is prescribed but schools have diverse contexts and as such, its delivery will differ from context to context. If it has to be classified it would lie on a continuum between the technical and the practical paradigm. The following subsection will review curriculum theory as the curriculum foundation that provides information that can trigger insights. This will improve the practical management and implementation of the curriculum (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 170).

## **2.3 Curriculum theory**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

Theoretical paradigms are important for curriculum studies because they guide the general orientation and direction of the study (Goodson, 1994: 260). Literature reports a prevalent tension between curriculum theory and curriculum practice (Goodson, 1994; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Goodson (1994) described this tension as one of alienation. Even though many legitimate criticisms are levelled against curriculum theory, like Bruner, cited in Ornstein & Hunkins (2004), curriculum theory can provide information that can trigger insights that will improve the practical everyday management and implementation of the curriculum.

Curriculum theory is defined in early literature as a set of statements or propositions, so worded that it can be used as a means of communication among people and as a directive to those who wish to study curriculum (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). This definition of theory is precisely the cause of alienation between theory and practice. This definition brings little value to the educator tasked with implementing and managing top down curriculum innovations.

A curriculum theory was defined for this study as the process of reflecting thoughtfulness about curriculum matters and seeking meaning and direction to curriculum experiences (Marsh, 2004: 201). This definition is consistent with a study that aims to document how school based curriculum managers engage with top-down curriculum innovations that is essential to brought to life at school level.

### **2.3.2 Metaphors and theoretical camp**

While it is desirable to have a curriculum theory that encompasses curriculum development and planning, such theory has eluded curriculum specialists. Diverse school settings and circumstances that curriculum decisions need to take into account defy any attempt to provide straightforward answers to questions of schooling (Marsh & Willis, 2007: 100). It is these questions of schooling that are generally asked by curriculum specialists in the process of developing a curriculum theory. For example Kliebard (1977), cited in Marsh & Willis (2007: 99), suggested that the key question for any curriculum theory should be: What should we teach? This key question acts as a leading question to other probing questions such as: Why should we teach this rather than that? Who should have access to what knowledge? The different value systems that we hold deny us simple answers to such questions. Marsh & Willis (2007: 100) state that even the most fundamental question about curriculum opens up an assortment of problems.

In an attempt to work around the ‘problem’ of producing an all-embracing curriculum theory, curriculum specialists have advocated the development of curriculum planning models (Vallance, 1982; Posner, 1998; cited in Marsh & Willis, 2007: 100). In contrast to curriculum theory, curriculum planning models do not attempt to establish general propositions but

identifies basic assumptions and considerations that must be accounted for in curriculum decisions and can show their interrelationships (Marsh & Willis, 2007: 100; Marsh 2004: 201).

Another solution involves curriculum theorising. Curriculum theorising is ‘to shift focus from the end product (the curriculum theory) to the process by which theory is sought (the process of theorising)’ (Vallance, 1982; cited in Marsh & Willis, 2007: 100). Curriculum theorising is important for this study because the researcher believes that any person undertaking curricula decisions, be it curriculum planners at policy level or curriculum managers at implementation level, is in fact curriculum theorising. Curriculum theorising is in fact undertaken by all persons with an interest in curriculum, including teachers, academics, and members of the community (Brady, 1984, cited in Marsh & Willis, 2007: 101).

Curriculum theorising is guided by numerous metaphors and theoretical camps. These metaphors are guided by theoretical underpinnings (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 182). Posner (2002: 48) refers to these theoretical underpinnings as ‘curriculum planning perspectives’. These theoretical underpinnings are referred to as curriculum approaches by Ornstein & Hunkins (2004: 02). A curriculum approach reflects a holistic position or a meta-orientation, encompassing the foundations of curriculum (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004:02).

Curriculum planning and development has been dominated by the technical production perspective, commonly referred to in literature as the Tyler rationale (Posner, 2002; Marsh, 2004). This perspective view curriculum as plans and stress procedures that should be followed to create such plans (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 184; Posner, 2002: 48). Tyler’s rationale argues that there are four questions that curriculum workers have to ask (Marsh, 2004: 107, 108):

- What educational goals should the school seek to attain?
- How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?



- How can learning experiences be organised for effective instruction?
- How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

This perspective is popular and has dominated curriculum-planning efforts since its inception by Tyler in 1949. The reason for its dominance is its apparent congruence with our assumptions about both schooling and curriculum planning (Posner, 2002: 49). This perspective uses the factory metaphor to analyse schooling. Schooling is a production process in which individual learning outcomes are the product (Posner, 2002: 50). The Tyler rationale is big on guiding curriculum workers with specific steps to follow in planning and managing the curriculum. Perhaps it can be credited with traditional curriculum management procedures, which are viewed by Frame (2003) as compliance management. It is criticised for its lack of description of what curriculum developers actually do when they plan the curriculum (Posner, 2002: 52).

Walker, who works with a Tyler rationale, attempts to overcome this descriptive weakness by introducing the naturalistic model in 1971 (Posner, 2002: 52). He used the term ‘naturalistic’ to indicate curriculum decision-making in natural setting (Marsh & Willis, 2004:79). To Walker, the natural setting was the work of curriculum planners in the Kettering arts Project, in this study the natural setting is the school. Walker was interested in how curriculum planners actually went about their tasks. He was engaged in field observation for a period of three years, in which he came up with the naturalistic model consisting of three elements (Marsh, 2004: 112):

- The curriculum’s platform.
- Its design.
- The deliberation associated with it.

The curriculum’s platform represents a system of beliefs and values that any individual or group, who come together to undertake curriculum development activities, hold (Posner, 2002: 52; Marsh, 2004: 112). An example of such platform is the student-teacher’s belief of

what good teaching is, framed by past experiences as a student. Deliberation is a process of engaging with different alternatives and ensuring that all role players are connected to the curriculum. The deliberation phase is important for this study because curriculum managers need to deliberate about alternative courses of action in order to manage the actual states of affairs and take corrective action where necessary (Marsh & Willis, 2004: 80). For curriculum management, the deliberation phase is on going because participants will 'gradually grasp new meanings through the linking and extending of ideas' (Reid, 1999, cited in Marsh & Willis, 2004: 81).

For curriculum managers at school level the platform for deliberation is SMT meetings, Departmental meetings, and the subject meetings. This study aims to observe proceedings at such meetings as well as examine documents relating to such meetings. The deliberation phase leads to some decisions for action, which are called the design (Marsh, 2004: 113). The design phase is not of particular interest in this study because it is outside the scope of the school; but it will be interesting to note how such design is communicated to the implementers of the curriculum.

Ornstein & Hunkins (2004: 02) outlines five curriculum approaches; three (behavioural approach, managerial approach and the systems approach) are classified as technical and two (academic approach and humanistic approach) as non-technical. The behavioural approach is similar to the Tyler rational discussed above. The managerial approach is relevant to this study because it considers the school as a social system and advocates the need for selecting, organising, communicating with and supervising people involved in curriculum decisions. It focuses on the administration and supervisory aspect of the curriculum and its advocates are interested in change and innovation (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 04).

The systems approach to curriculum planning views the units of the school in relation to the whole. This approach was influenced by systems theory. In the systems approach to curriculum, the parts of a school are closely examined in terms of their interrelatedness and influence on each other (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 06).

Stenhouse (2004: 61) came up with a model that opposes the technical perspective, stating that Tyler's perspective is more suited to a curriculum that focuses on skills and information. He called his model 'a process model'. Stenhouse argues that the technical model is suited to those subjects focussing on skills and knowledge. Peters (1966), cited in Stenhouse (2004), argues for the intrinsic justification of content. He believes that education should focus on taking part in activities that are worthwhile in themselves, not because they lead to the achievement of objectives (Stenhouse, 2004: 62). It is precisely for this reason that Stenhouse follows Rath's (1971) 'system of procedure' for identifying activities that have inherent worth. The process model is relevant to this study because a curriculum manager at school level (e.g. Deputy-principal or HOD) does not focus only on the achievement of objectives but also focuses on the kind of activities given to learners. In pre-moderation of tasks given to learners, the principle of procedure needs to be considered.

An approach which is more relevant to the school is the managerial approach. The managerial approach considers the school as a social system, whereby groups of people such as parents, teachers, students, curriculum specialists as well as administrators interact according to certain norms and behaviours. This approach is an offshoot of the behavioural approach and relies on planning and managing the curriculum in terms of programs, schedules, space, resources, equipment and personnel (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004:04). This approach is useful in an era of change and implementation as is prevalent in South Africa's education system today.

When the South African education authorities introduced Outcomes Based Education as an approach in 1997, one of the areas they hoped to influence was teaching strategies. As a result, teachers were urged to do away with teacher centred methods of instruction, in favour of learner centred methods of instruction (DoE, 1995). This move was influenced by the humanistic approach. The humanistic approach is rooted in the progressive philosophy and child centred movements (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 08).

This approach encourages numerous curriculum activities such as lesson plans based on life experiences, group projects, simulation, dramatisation, field trips and creative problem solving, whilst this list is not exhaustive. This approach encourages curriculum meetings with

curriculum committees making joint decisions. Experienced as a curriculum manager and head of a department, functional committees are one of the prerequisites of a well-managed curriculum. The humanistic approach has some similarities with Stenhouse's process model. Both the humanistic approach and the process model value 'procedures' and teacher development (Stenhouse, 2004: 69; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 09). The humanistic approach endures sharp criticism from those educationists placing more value on higher standards and accountability.

The reconceptualists come to the field of curriculum theorising with a broader view, which considers larger ideological issues of education (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 09). The reconceptualists are an off shoot of the humanistic approach. They are interested in studying curriculum from an academic point of view. The reconceptualists believe that curriculum is postmodern. There is no one way of approaching curriculum planning and development. It is fluid rather than planned, open rather than closed and thrives from lively interactions among participants (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004: 10; Doll, 2002).

The literature are reviewed on the institutionalisation of curriculum changes because social institutions such as schools have been marked by significant and frequent changes. Be it in its aims and objectives, its teaching content, teaching strategies, or in the manner in which learners are assessed (Marsh, 2004: 137). It is at the institutionalisation phase that these changes bear fruits or altogether fail.

## **2.4 The institutionalisation of curriculum changes**

Over the past 10 years, curriculum change has become a permanent feature of teaching in South Africa (Carl, 2005:223). The current National Curriculum Statement brought the need for changes in South African schools (Pretorius, 2006, cited in Sello, 2009: 33). The following changes were notable:

- The publication and implementation of national education policy through the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996.
- The determination of the Norms and Standards for educators through section 3(4) (f) and (l) of the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996.
- To provide a uniform and democratic system of school governance and management the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 are introduced.
- Duties and responsibilities of educators are refined through the Employment of Educators act 76 of 1998 (ELRC, 2004).

The above are just a few examples of fundamental policy changes that had to be institutionalised at school level. These policy changes is followed by changes in the policy documents in an effort to improve curriculum delivery. After the South African school system experienced hurdles in curriculum delivery and subsequently learner achievement, the Minister of Basic Education appointed a review committee, which is tasked with streamlining the NCS. The review committee recommended a coherent, simple, and clear five-year plan across the schooling system. This plan is driven by a new document titled Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) (DoE, 2009: 62).

South African schools are currently institutionalising CAPS. The task team for the Review of the Implementation of the NCS recommended in depth training for principals, Deputy-principals and HOD's on roles, curriculum content and assessment requirements to be able to support teachers effectively (DoE, 2009: 57). Whilst the Department of Basic Education has done a great job of simplifying the National Curriculum Statement, the implementing institution still has to work hard to institutionalise the changes. This aspect emerged from the findings of the task team. The capacity of the school management to mediate the curriculum is questioned by a number of role players who made submissions. Mediating the curriculum has two aspects, one is mediating the demands and improving the systems to lighten the administrative burdens for educators, the other is mediating the interpretation of documents

for curriculum delivery in the classrooms (DoE, 2009:58). Judging from these new demands placed on school managers, managing the curriculum cannot only comprise of supervising compliance through marking of a checklist, as it was a tradition in the past, but should envelop a myriad of roles like instructional leadership, management of change, connecting teachers to the curriculum and building learning communities where curriculum deliberations take place.

Any person charged with managing the curriculum will also be dealing with the management of change. Marsh (2004) included the topic of innovation and planned change under the category of curriculum management. Curriculum innovations are familiar processes both internationally (Tam, 2010), and nationally (Graham-Jolly, 2003).

The reason may be an inherent desire for man to improve their quality of life. Marsh (2004: 140) states that for a change to qualify as an innovation it must have two attributes; new to the adopting educational system and intended to improve. Marsh (2004) outlines four phases in the process of curriculum change:

- The orientation phase
- Initiation or adoption phase
- Implementation phase
- The institutionalisation phase

This study will focus on the institutionalisation phase. The institutionalisation phase refers to establishing structures and patterns of behaviour so that the use of the innovation will be maintained over time (Marsh, 2004: 138). It is arguable at the stage that previous innovations collapsed (Curriculum 2005 & National Curriculum Statement). In a press statement released by the Ministry of Basic Education (2010), the Minister pronounced ‘in far too many schools learners are not learning what they should’. This pronouncement marked yet another era of change labelled ‘Schooling 2014’.

The national Department of Education has been criticised for managing change through strategies that focus on informing teachers and training them to undertake specific tasks, independent of their organisational contexts (Graham-Jolly, 2003: 105). This neglect of the institutionalisation phase led Jansen (1997), cited in Graham-Jolly (2003:106), to conclude that the new curriculum was being ‘implemented in isolation and ignorance of almost 50 years of accumulated experience with respect to curriculum change in both first world and developing countries’.

With the present streamlining of the curriculum the national Department of Education is concentrating more on centralising decision making rather than on equipping schools to mediate the curriculum. This study seeks to promote the system approach to change by displaying what different schools in different contexts can do to manage the curriculum effectively. Shoba (2009: 50) conducted a study of the role of school management teams in curriculum management.

She found that the ‘SMT has a shallow understanding of the post 1994 curriculum and their knowledge is influenced by the traditional approach that focuses on supervision’. South Africa erred in ignoring the implications of educational change at institutional level.

Fullan (2007) has made authoritative contribution in the field of educational change. He has challenged rational and linear approaches to change (Graham-Jolly, 2003: 111) and has borrowed theoretical concepts and ideas from fields outside of traditional disciplines of education to develop powerful arguments for alternative conceptions of school change. It is important for this study to document what schools need to do in order to support curriculum innovations. McLaughlin (2005: 70) states that context is vital in policy implementation and the answer to ‘why are policies not implemented as planned?’ or ‘why is change not sustained?’ lies in teachers’ proximate professional communities. I suppose this statement deserves to be heeded by South African education managers more than any other is because our diversity is our identity. Our education system is a product of the amalgamation of 19 bureaucracies (Jansen, 2003: 35). Fullan (2007: 108) proposes one solution: ‘the focus of curriculum change should be the individual school acting as a learning organisation and supported through access to the resources of the broader system’.

The ministry of basic education has invested large human and material resources in the streamlining of the NCS as well as the broader plan of schooling 2014. The question remains whether curriculum managers at school level are ready to initiate and institutionalise educational change. Wong (2007: 01) reports a case study of a primary school in Hong Kong implementing the school based curriculum in response to policy directive from the top. In this paper, Wong outlines the purpose of educational change as to help schools accomplish their goals more effectively. Schools may go through a process of replacing some old structures with better ones, thus involving change in practice (Fullan, 2001, cited in Wong, 2007:02). In this study the target is to establish how successful rural schools respond to curriculum changes. What adjustments in school structures came because of curriculum changes and whether school management observes the stages involved in educational change.

Cheng (2002) cited in Wong (2007:03), states that change at school level consists of three different stages. They are:

- **Unfreezing:** During this stage, the school accepts that the status quo should change, looks at its strengths and weaknesses and prepares human and material resources to adapt to the change.
- **Changing:** During this stage, the school implements and manages the change. This involves monitoring process, giving clarification, motivation as well as the promotion of new structures and ideas.
- **Refreezing:** This includes the identification of favourable outcomes of the change, removal of unfavourable effects and the globalising of the successes.

Looking at the above analysis of the institutionalisation of curriculum change it is obvious that the load of making curriculum changes a success lies heavily on the shoulders of curriculum managers at school level. Labane (2009) concluded that in order for curriculum to be implemented successfully, the management of the curriculum needs to improve, and



Shoba (2009) discovered that effective curriculum management is hampered by traditional roles. Noted in the above analysis is that managing the curriculum by solely focusing on supervisory duties without observing the dynamics of school change may yield negative results. Even proposals that may seem completely settled, as the call for grade educators to plan together may never materialise unless management is proactive through effective scheduling. Wong (2007) observed that even reflection and collaboration needs to be planned and scheduled by curriculum managers.

Institutionalisation as a phase in the process of curriculum change is vital for this study. In a hurry to make things happen, the education authorities neglected the institutionalisation stage when the NCS was implemented. Jansen (1997) questioned why almost 50 years of accumulated experience about curriculum change was neglected during the implementation of the NCS. For these things to be heeded by schools instructional leaders are needed. Instructional leadership has to be inspiring to say the least. In Chapter 2.5, literature on instructional leadership will be reviewed.

## **2.5 Instructional leadership**

The term instructional leadership is often used in the literature in reference to the role of the school principal in matters of pedagogy. The Department of Education defines instructional leadership as the principal's connection to the classroom (DoE, 2009: 17). Doyle & Rice (2002: 49) defines the role of the principal as an instructional leader as one that focuses on instruction, building a community of learners, sharing decision making, sustaining the basics, leveraging time, supporting on-going professional development for all staff members, redirecting resources to support a multifaceted school plan, and creating a climate of integrity, inquiry, and continuous improvement. Through the definition, the principal is influential in all that goes on behind the classroom walls, he values the people who carry the vision of the school, encourages curriculum deliberations and thus strives to create a platform for curriculum managers and workers to reflect on their core functions. Brewer (2001), cited in Doyle & Rice (2002: 49), suggests that the role of the instructional leader be expanded to incorporate a shift from 'management' (working in the system of administrative tasks) to

‘leadership’ (working on the system). This statement is important for this study because traditional curriculum management has only focused on bureaucratic tasks thus ignoring the spirit behind all curriculum innovations. For this reason curriculum knowledge has eluded many managers and educators.

In a study conducted by Shoba (2003: 63) the lack of curriculum knowledge among SMT members, particularly the principal, proved to be the foundation for other curriculum management barriers identified in the selected school. Sadly, this lack of knowledge also meant that curriculum leadership was uninspiring to say the least.

This lack of knowledge is not surprising considering that studies have shown that most South African school principals have not received adequate training in instructional leadership (Tsukudu & Taylor, 1995; Sayed, 2000; Krause & Powell, 2002; Mestry & Grobblers, 2002; Van Der Westhuizen *et al.*, 2004; all cited in Hoadley *et al.* 2009: 375). The national qualification for principals, recently introduced, recognises managing teaching and learning as a crucial role for school principals (Bush *et al.* 2010: 07).

Considering this lack of knowledge, a review of literature on principals’ behaviours that constitute instructional leadership has been included.

### **2.5.1 Instructional leadership behaviours**

Instructional leaders must influence others to ‘pair appropriate instructional practices with their best knowledge of the subject matter’ (Quinn, 2002: 447). A school principal who achieves this feat is successful in the practice of instructional leadership. International literature is rich in studies of the principals’ instructional leadership behaviours (Leithwood, 1994; Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Heck, 1992). Quinn (2002) describes an effective instructional leader as someone performing at a high level in four areas:

- **As a resource provider:** the principal act as a broker of materials, information, opportunities and threats.

- **As instructional resource:** the principal sets expectations for continual improvement of the instructional program.
- **As communicator:** models commitment towards school goals and articulates instructional vision.
- **As visible presence:** the principal is out and around school, visiting grade and phase meetings and classrooms (Andrew & Soder, cited in Quinn, 2002:448).

This reference to an effective instructional leader will provide this study with a framework for observing an instructional leader.

### 2.5.2 A model for instructional leadership

Hoadley (2007) argues that the context for studying instructional leadership in South Africa needs to be located within a broader context of the decentralisation of education in South Africa. The aim of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 is to democratise education leadership and management in South African schools.

This democratisation of education leadership and management, being something new, has resulted in the lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities of school leaders and managers (Sayed, 2002; DoE, 2004).

Global literature on the roles and responsibilities of the principal suggest she or he is the instructional leader. Kinney (2009: 48) affirms this when she labels an ‘instructional leader’ as a synonym for ‘principal’, though the roles and responsibilities of the principal are so diverse that instructional leadership end up on the tail of the principal’ priorities. Elmore (1999), cited in Hoadley (2007), state that the direct involvement in instruction by principals is among the least frequent of their activities. It is safe to deduce that this may be the case in

South African schools because Bush & Joubert (2004) conducted a research study in Gauteng and found that a large sample of principals do not regard themselves as instructional leaders. They have delegated this responsibility to their deputies.

The confusion may emanate from the Employment of Educators act 76 of 1998 (ELRC, 2004: C-64-65) which states the duties and responsibilities of educators under the heading 'Extra & Co-Curricular' as follows:

- **principal:** 'to play an active role in promoting extra and co-curricular activities in the school and to plan major school functions'.
- **Deputy-principal:** 'To be responsible for curriculum and pedagogy, like choice of textbooks, co-ordinating the work of subject committees and groups, timetabling, 'INSET' and developmental programmes, and arranging teaching practice'.

The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 therefore places the deputy-principal in charge of curriculum and instruction. Another reason why principals do not regard themselves as instructional leaders is that they do not have time to practice it (Doyle, 2002: 48). 'A typical principal performs an enormous number of tasks each day, but only 11% relates to instructional leadership', (Stronge, 1998, cited in Doyle, 2002: 50). The principals' time is spent making daily decisions and they barely have time for strategic decisions. Instructional leadership is not a short-term goal but long term. Instructional leaders need to invest time putting instructional strategies into place, in plans of three to five years (Doyle, 2002: 50). All these daily decisions that act as barriers to effective instructional leadership are bureaucracies that arise because of administrative pressures. Doyle (2002) presents a model for instructional leadership. This model works efficiently 'in' the system (administrative tasks) while working strategically 'on' the system (leadership tasks).

Literature on models of instructional leadership reveals three competing models. Hallinger & Murphy model (1985); Murphy (1990) and Weber (1989) show the importance of instructional leadership functions, which amongst others include coordinating the curriculum, an element relevant to this study. These models are summarised in the following tables:

**Table 1: Elements of Murphy and Hallinger Model of Instructional Leadership.**

Defines the Mission	Manages Instructional Programme	Promotes school Climate
---------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------

**Table 2: Elements of Murphy's model of Instructional Leadership**

Developing Mission & Goals	Managing the Educational Production Function	Promoting an Academic Learning climate	Developing a supportive Work Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framing school goals</li> <li>• Communicating school goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting quality instruction</li> <li>• Supervising and evaluating instruction</li> <li>• Allocating and protecting instructional time</li> <li>• Coordinating curriculum</li> <li>• Monitoring student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing positive expectations and standards</li> <li>• Maintaining high visibility</li> <li>• Providing incentives for teachers</li> <li>• Promoting professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a safe and orderly learning environment</li> <li>• Providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement</li> <li>• Developing staff collaboration and cohesion</li> <li>• Securing outside resources in support</li> </ul>

			of school goals  • Forging links  between the home and school
--	--	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Table 3: Elements of weber’s Model of Instructional leadership**

Defining the School’s Mission	Managing Curriculum And Instruction	Promoting a Positive Learning Climate	Observing and improving Instruction	Assessing the Instructional Programme
The instructional leader collaboratively develops a common vision for the school with stakeholders	The instructional leader monitors classroom practice alignment with the school’s mission, provides resources and support in the use of	The instructional leader promotes a positive learning climate by communicating goals, establishing expectations, and establishing an orderly learning environment	The instructional leader observes and improves instruction through the use of classroom observation and professional development opportunities	The instructional leader contributes to the planning, designing, administering, and analysis of assessments that evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum

	instructional  best practices, and  models and  provides support in  the use of data to  drive instruction			
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--

**SOURCE: Henderson, N. P. (2007:17-20)**

#### **2.5.2.1 Structural support**

In order to successfully work both in the system and on the system an instructional leader needs to develop and nurture a structure in which to delegate operational and functional decisions.

I added nurture because such structure needs to have the following characteristics;

- **Reinventing relationships:** This is the biggest challenge to becoming free of bureaucratic tasks. It involves building a team where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- **Inclusiveness:** Instructional leaders must ensure that all members of a team are conversant with the overall instructional goal and the interaction between the purpose, the system and their daily tasks.
- **Exclusiveness:** Exclusiveness refers to the recognition of special efforts and talents.

- **Intimacy:** intimacy eliminates resistance. It does not refer to emotional closeness but to the willingness to pass on complete and accurate information. The source of information may come from all the members of a team (Doyle, 2002: 50-51).

### 2.5.3 Distributed leadership

Notwithstanding the fact that most literature on instructional leadership regards the school principal as an instructional leader, a notion of distributed leadership is propagated in instructional leadership literature, as evidenced in Quinn (2002) and DoE (2009). In terms of her or his position the principal has to create an environment conducive to appropriate curriculum management and leadership but also allow for the HOD's to lead a particular discipline and participate as a follower in a process where an ordinary teacher is the leader. This is distributed leadership at its best where the traditional hierarchy is turned upside down (DoE, 2009: 16). This notion relates to this study because its motivation comes from lamentations of poor curriculum management evident at schools (Shoba, 2009; Labane, 2009; Hoadley *et al.* 2009). While this study acknowledges that in the 'leadership and management literature' leadership and management are two distinct concepts, this study approaches leadership as an element of management. While international literature mainly refers to instructional leadership, South African literature widely uses 'management' (Bush *et al.* 2010: 07). Research conducted by Roberts & Roach (2006), cited in DoE (2009:16), indicated that the notion of distributed leadership improves curriculum management system and structure at schools.

It is a notion so important for curriculum management that 'in schools where there is true distribution of leadership, systems and procedures are well entrenched and leadership functions have been shared so that the school functions well even in the principal's absence' (DoE, 2009: 16).



### **2.5.3.1 A useful perspective on distributed leadership**

Spillane (2005) does not regard distributed leadership as only the sharing of leadership functions. He regards distributed leadership as ‘first and foremost about leadership practice rather than leaders and their roles, routines, functions and structures’ (Spillane, 2005: 144). This perspective on distributed leadership focuses on leadership practice. The emphasis is on the interaction among school leaders, followers and their situation. In light of this definition, the notion of distributed leadership advocated by the Department of education (that of merely sharing functions so that the school functions well even in the principal’s absence) can be regarded as a narrow one.

This broader view advocated by Spillane (2005) is useful for curriculum leadership and management because teachers, who are followers in the hierarchy, are bearers of vital knowledge regarding curriculum. The focus on interactions among leaders, followers and their situation allows us to draw on the knowledge provided by teachers in managing and leading the curriculum. For an example, an observation of departmental meeting proceedings can provide us with an opportunity to record these interactions between the leaders (HOD), the followers (teachers) and their situation (the context of the school’s curriculum).

The narrow focus on people with leadership positions is inadequate for three reasons:

- Some leaders in curriculum management are without positions, but lead by virtue of their knowledge.
- Leadership practice is not something done to followers but followers are one of the three elements of leadership.
- It is not the actions of individuals that is important but the interactions among them (Spillane, 2005: 145).

In the light of the above, this study aims to employ this notion of distributed leadership in curriculum management and leadership matters.

#### **2.5.4 Curriculum management structures at school level**

This section of the literature review will focus on departmental policy provisions regarding school structures required to drive curriculum delivery in a public school. The notion of the Collaborative School Management Model widely used in countries like UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, will also be introduced.

A number of designated school managers (the principal, the deputy principal and the head of department or Education specialist), serve as members of the School Management Team (SMT). The SMT collaborates with other school structures such as subject or learning area committees, School Assessment Team (SAT), School Development Team (SDT), School Based Support Team (SBST) and School Governing Body (SGB) to create an enabling framework for leading and managing the curriculum (DoE, 2009:16).

It is beyond the scope of this study to deal with all the above mentioned management structures, but any curriculum management study will certainly delve into the activities of the SMT. The existence of such structures as the SAT, SBST and the SGB ensures that all role players are involved in curriculum matters. The teachers whose involvement in curriculum development has been the subject of research in South Africa (Carl, 2005). Such necessary involvement of teachers can be achieved through such structures as the SAT and the SBST.

The Collaborative School Model (CSM) is reviewed as a model that can possibly enhance the management of curriculum in South African schools. The CSM focuses on the separation of tasks as prescribed by policy and for curriculum projects teams. It is a task oriented focus with a set of checks and balances to provide some degree of accountability (Marsh, 2003: 148). While the policy group can be narrow and prescriptive, the project group comprises of mainly teachers and (in advanced settings) learners.

The CSM operates as a management cycle consisting of six phases:

- Goal setting
- Policy making (At school level)
- Planning of programmes
- Preparation and approval of programme budgets
- Implementing and
- Evaluation (Marsh, 2003: 149)

The CSM presuppose that successful management of the curriculum depends upon the principal's capacity to maintain a purposeful concentration of tasks in hand while at the same time providing sensitive and encouraging support to individuals.

The value of managing curriculum effectively is appreciated in both the prescriptive and flexible curriculum. In a flexible curriculum schools are allowed the freedom to be innovative, thus placing more demands on curriculum managers. A prescriptive curriculum appears to demand that teachers and students will do the same in each classroom but some schools perform much better than others do. Middlewood (2003) ascribes this gap to the influence of senior curriculum managers. In South African schools, the principal is the senior curriculum manager. She or he functions within the ambit of a School Management Team (SMT). The principal is the instructional leader. She or he chairs the SMT meetings, where curriculum management issues are addressed. This role may be delegated to the Deputy principal depending on the size of the school. A typical SMT in a large secondary school will have a senior manager (principal or deputy principal), middle managers (departmental heads), and junior managers (senior teachers). In reviewing the literature on curriculum management structures, it is useful to examine the different roles of the senior, middle and junior managers respectively.

#### **2.5.4.1 The role of senior curriculum managers**

In South African schools the principal is the senior curriculum manager. She or he functions within the ambit of a School Management Team (SMT). The principal is the instructional leader. She or he chairs the SMT meetings, where curriculum management issues are addressed. The following roles and functions are considered primary to the principal's tasks.

### ***Having a view of the whole curriculum***

Senior curriculum managers have a view of the whole curriculum (Middlewood, 2003: 66). The curriculum debate differentiates among different kinds of curriculum. Curriculum scholars see curriculum as operating through many levels, the rhetoric curriculum (as stated in policy statements), the planned curriculum (as found in work schedules and lesson plans), the enacted curriculum (as it is taught in the classroom), the hidden curriculum (as communicated by unwritten codes), the tested curriculum (as communicated by national assessments) and the received curriculum (as received by the mind and heart of the learner), (Glattorn, 1994; Middlewood, 2003: 67). The received curriculum is the responsibility of the principal and other senior managers (Middlewood, 2003: 67). The received curriculum is as a result of the interaction among all the levels or kinds of curriculum. Thus, the principal should ensure synergy and that ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’ (Middlewood, 2003: 67). The principal can influence the whole curriculum through Whole School Development (WSD) portfolio of the Institutional Level Support Team (ILST). The WSD portfolio can prioritise curriculum development at school level and channel necessary resources to remedy gaps in the received curriculum.

### ***Accountability for consistently high standards***

The principal is accountable for the standards of education in a school. These standards must be of consistently high quality. Middlewood (2003: 68) stresses the importance of ‘consistency’ since the task is to ensure that each individual student’s received curriculum is of similar quality. Consistency is a challenge if one considers that curriculum is offered by different teachers across different subjects and experienced by different students. The solution seems to lie in how monitoring, evaluation and feedback are managed at school level (Middlewood, 2003: 68). It is the role of senior curriculum managers to draw an effective management strategy for classroom observation schedules.

### ***Managing structures***

The principal and senior managers need to aim for structures in which the curriculum can be managed effectively (Middlewood, 2003: 72). Hargreaves (1997), cited in Middlewood, (2003: 72), argues that teachers' practices are grounded not only in their expertise but in structures and routines in which they can function unabated. In my experience as a curriculum middle manager I have noted what Middlewood (2003: 73) identified as a structure's facilitative role of necessary processes required to manage curriculum management effectively. These processes are as follows:

- Whole school policy on assessment is essential for consistency in maintaining learner progress.
- Academic and pastoral structures of a school need to be managed as a whole.
- Structures which keep key areas of the curriculum separately managed make it difficult to identify duplication. (failure by schools to facilitate phase planning and grade planning may lead to duplication of efforts).
- Structures which ensure that resources are allocated equitable among departments (Middlewood, 2003: 74).

### ***Developing an appropriate culture***

A school culture conducive to teaching and learning is the aim of every senior manager striving for excellence. Senior curriculum managers should create a culture that supports both Learners and educators. The management and leadership literature is abuzz with the concept of a 'learning organisation' as advocated by Senge (1994) and other influential writers such as Covey (1989). An appropriate culture allows teachers to learn within the school as a learning organisation. Curriculum managers with a view of the whole curriculum need to recognise that effective learning flourishes best for students in the context where the teachers

do not neglect their learning potential (Middlewood, 2003: 72). The senior curriculum managers can prioritise curriculum development as a whole school development activity.

### ***Managing the involvement of staff in curriculum management***

Despite the effectiveness of the shared curriculum leadership, its visibility can send out a message to other staff that managing the curriculum is the responsibility of all teachers (Middlewood, 2003: 78). In South African schools, with its highly prescriptive curriculum, there is a danger of over reliance on curriculum management tools such as checklists. Thus, the need to share the interaction between teachers and learners is fundamental to enhancing the teachers' connectedness to the curriculum. Carl (1995; 2002) has written extensively on maintaining a lively connection between the teachers and the curriculum. Carl (1995), cited in Middlewood, argue that teachers' confidence grow if senior managers allow them to be involved in curriculum decision making. Thus, senior curriculum managers need to permit high levels of participation in matters such as curriculum evaluation and choice of textbooks.

#### **2.5.4.2 The role of curriculum middle managers**

While senior curriculum managers have a view of the whole curriculum, it is the curriculum middle manager that has the greatest impact on learning and teaching in the classroom (Coleman, 2003: 83) The position of a curriculum middle manager in South African schools is that of a departmental head. She or he is responsible for the academic stream e.g. Commerce, Science, Humanities and Languages. In primary schools she or he is in charge of a phase. This position is intermediate between senior managers and class teacher (Coleman, 2003: 83).

Everard and Morris (1990: 23) define a curriculum middle manager as 'those teachers who have some responsibility for planning, organising, directing and controlling the work of other teachers'. Coleman (2003: 83) agrees with the above definitions and adds that while a curriculum middle manager is free of whole school responsibilities her or his responsibilities extend beyond the classroom. It may happen that due to staffing problems and the size and staffing of a school some schools may not have designated curriculum middle managers but such duties can be identified with a particular individual.

Coleman (2003:84) conducted a study in three schools in Kwazulu-Natal province, which provides some information about the range of curriculum management posts allocated to schools of varying sizes. This information does not give us a definite method of allocating curriculum management posts but it does highlight one important factor; that these posts largely depend on the type of the school, the number of enrolled learners and the number of educators. The following cases are provided by Coleman (2003: 84) as examples of how the abovementioned variables determine the number of curriculum management posts. In a primary school of 651 learners and 17 educators, the study showed that the school had one principal post and one acting deputy principal. In a high school of 1070 learners and 27 educators the study revealed that the school had 1 principal, 1 Deputy principal, 3 HOD's and one acting HOD. In a multi-cultural school of 870 learners and 31 educators, the study revealed that the school had one principal, one deputy principal and three HOD's.

The Department of Education places the responsibility of planning, supervising and controlling the work of teachers squarely on the curriculum middle manager.

#### **2.5.4.3 The role of junior curriculum managers**

In some schools visited by Coleman (2003), several teachers acted as grade heads and subject heads. One such teacher described her role as 'to run meetings connected with the English curriculum ... knowing what to teach and sharing ideas with colleagues' (Coleman, 2003: 84). In the above example of a school with no designated curriculum middle manager. Senior teachers who acted as grade heads and subject heads carried out such tasks.

#### **2.5.4.4 How do school management teams in well-performing schools manage the curriculum?**

Curriculum leadership and management research conducted in the context of well performing schools (academically effective) identified similar traits in two case study schools. The following descriptors were used to describe the engagement of the SMT in curriculum management:

- Continuously supports
- Encourages

- Consult, listen and then decides
- Praises and helps
- Regularly advocates
- Facilitates (Lee & Dimmock, 1999: 464-469)

The Department of Education compiled a School Management Team manual in which the activities of the SMT in well performing schools are stated as follows:

- They ensure that teaching and learning is going on in every period, in every class and each formal school day.
- The school is organised into class units and teachers have their duty loads in October of the year before.
- Learners are involved in curriculum management matters e.g. have access to work schedules, programme of assessment, and timetables.
- There is a functional subject committee engaged in inter alia, planning and assessment, information sharing, unpacking curriculum and policy documents, monitoring, arranging support where necessary and facilitating team teaching.
- They have regular management meetings in which progress in teaching and learning features prominently on the agenda (DoE, 2010).

## **2.6 Empirical evidence and a need for further research**

In the last two decades, enormous pressure has been placed on the field of education to deliver improved student performance. In the US (United States) in particular, the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2000 arrived with accountability measures and hefty demands in the field of learning and instruction. Studies on school leadership and management have thrived under these conditions. The trend in the last decade has been the linkage of the



management processes to the curriculum and the focus on instructional leadership (Graczewski *et al.* 2009; Tam, 2010).

The South African leadership research base is limited, especially studies that link the management processes to the curriculum. Hoadley et al. (2009: 375) states that even the knowledge of how principals manage the curriculum in schools in South Africa is limited. Even studies on the management variables which have been shown in previous studies as significant are limited. In Taylor's view efficient use of resources '*is a central problem in South African schools and one which we know least about*' (Taylor, 2007: 536). Since the implementation of the post-apartheid curriculum empirical studies have focused on implementation (Labane, 2009) and on the role of the SMT in managing the curriculum. (Shoba, 2009).

The need for further research on how curriculum is managed in South African schools has grown on the face of the on-going curriculum streamlining, the principals' lack of curriculum knowledge reported in previous studies (Shoba, 2009), the uneven state of curriculum delivery in our schools and the need to conceptualise curriculum management variables at school level. Lastly, our schools are facing the challenges of unqualified and under qualified educators as well as a high educator turnover in rural areas. These challenges mean that curriculum implementation is an ever-constant challenge in rural schools and school managers should be proactive in managing change and educator development.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The literature review in this chapter provided a brief background on curriculum management in a democratic era of South African education. This was followed by a review of curriculum theory. This review revealed that while curriculum managers view curriculum theory as irrelevant to curriculum practice, their very actions define curriculum theorising. Thus, a conscious effort on the part of the curriculum manager to understand theoretical underpinnings, metaphors and meta-orientations will improve the management of the curriculum.

The review of literature on the institutionalisation of curriculum changes revealed that the management of change at school level is largely ignored, resulting in the collapse of curriculum innovations at school level. Curriculum managers need to be aware of the stages of that schools go through because of change.

Next, the review focused on the school principal as an instructional leader. The principal, who is an effective instructional leader, will provide the needed shift from management to leadership, thus influencing how the school manages the curriculum. Three models of instructional leadership were tabled (Murphy & Hallinger, 1985; Murphy, 1990; and Weber, 1989), all agreeing that an instructional leader coordinates the curriculum, supervises and evaluates and monitors classroom practice in line with the school's curriculum goals. Notwithstanding the fact that the principal is an instructional leader; this review revealed that a notion of distributed leadership is a useful perspective in managing the curriculum. This study differentiated between a narrow view and a broader view of distributed leadership. A narrow view simply regards distributed leadership as sharing leadership functions while a broader view focuses on the interaction of school leaders and their practices. The latter view is vital for curriculum managers because it promotes managers who bear vital knowledge regarding curriculum.

Lastly, this review focused on curriculum management structures at school level. The SMT is the main structure for managing the curriculum.

The role of the SMT in curriculum management has been largely studied (Shoba, 2009). The approach in this study was different in that the SMT was broken down into senior, middle and junior management levels. The interactions between these levels are the pulse of curriculum managers at schools.

This study revealed that curriculum management has changed from the pre-democracy era of compliant management to the present day era of managing people, structures and resources for the ultimate impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Chapter 3 examines at the research design of this study. The focus will be on the case study design.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter reviewed the literature on curriculum leadership and management. This review included an in depth discussion of curriculum management processes at school level. This discussion developed in the context of a changing curriculum. Anyone charged with managing the curriculum is also managing change. Literature revealed that education managers neglected a wealth of knowledge about managing change when the NCS was implemented in South Africa, Jansen (1997) cited in Graham-Jolly (2003:106). The SMT, which is the main structure for managing the curriculum, was broken down into senior, middle, and junior management levels. Each level has its own responsibility with regards to the management of the curriculum. Lastly, in line with the managerial approach to curriculum orientation, the literature revealed that academically successful schools have certain entrenched systems and procedures for managing the curriculum.

This chapter examines the research methodology which includes: research design, data collection and data analysis techniques.

### **3.2 Qualitative research methodology**

A qualitative research method seemed appropriate for this study. By definition, a study is qualitative when a researcher collects data in a face to face situation by interacting with selected persons in their settings (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). The phrase ‘in their settings’ is important in this definition because all qualitative approaches have, according to Leedy & Ormrod (2005:133), two things in common: (1) They focus on phenomena occurring in their natural settings and (2) study phenomena in all their complexity. Likewise, in this study the phenomenon is curriculum management occurring in a natural setting, which is the school.

Qualitative research uses a number of modes of inquiry viz. ethnography, phenomenology, case study, grounded theory and critical studies. All these modes of inquiry share the following common orientations:

- Qualitative research is based on the constructivist philosophy that assumes that reality is multilayer, interactive, shared social experience (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 133) agrees with this assumption and state that in qualitative research there is no 'single truth' to be discovered but reality has multiple perspectives.
- The goal of qualitative research is to understand social phenomena from participant's perspective (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). It is critical for a qualitative researcher to be able to interpret and make sense of what she or he sees (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 133).
- Qualitative research uses multi-method strategies to collect valid data. A researcher may opt for participant observation, direct observation, in-depth interview, content analysis, artefacts and supplementary techniques (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 316). Many writers speak of an emergent design inherent in the data collection decisions can be taken during the study.
- The researcher is in an active participatory role. Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 133) sees the researcher as an instrument in much the same way as a rating scale or intelligence test is an instrument.
- Qualitative research is rooted in a belief that human action cannot be divorced from the setting in which it occurs (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 316). Bogdan & Biklen (2007: 04) uses the term 'naturalistic' to emphasise the importance of context for qualitative research. These authors believe that a researcher understands action best when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs. As they say in their own words 'to divorce an act, word, or gesture from its context, is for the qualitative researcher, to lose sight of its significance' (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 05).

- Qualitative research is descriptive. Perhaps it is the popular definitive feature of qualitative research. In their search for understanding, qualitative researchers do not reduce narrative data to numerical symbols, instead they try to analyse narrative data with all their richness as closely as possible to its original form (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 05).
- Qualitative researchers use inductive reasoning. A researcher does not enter the site with pre-conceived ideas (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 05).

The above orientations were considered in choosing the method and design for this study. This study seeks to document *curriculum management practices* in the context of an academically successful secondary school. It assumes that in a school setting there are key participants who are informative about the research foci. These key participants have something important to say about curriculum management, the researcher can interpret something in their behaviour and in the way they interact among themselves and in the way they respond to policy decisions. People ascribe meaning to specific events, processes and objects. Their perceptions are what they consider real and thus, direct their actions, thoughts and feelings (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). It is specified that the mentioned orientations or features are not absolutes. Qualitative studies do not exhibit these features to an equal degree. Some studies lack in some respects while other studies feature all the traits (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 04).

### **3.3 Theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research**

In qualitative research, the word ‘theory’ has the same meaning as the word ‘paradigm’. A paradigm is a mind-set. A frame of mind orients our thinking (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 24). The understanding of a theoretical perspective is very important for a researcher. It is a revelation. It is the theoretical perspective that clarifies what the researcher wants. The clarity must first be in the mind of the researcher. Most research approaches emphasise facts and causes of behaviour and can be linked to positivism and the social theorist (Auguste Comte, Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 24).

Qualitative research is different in that it is concerned neither with facts nor causes of behaviour. It seeks to understand the meaning of events, experience and actions from the participants' perspectives. There are a number of theories that inform the work of qualitative researchers. In this study two approaches were used, which seemed to guide the researcher's thinking. These are discussed in the following sub sections.

### **3.3.1 Phenomenological approach**

A class prefect brought a case to the class teacher. Two learners were at loggerheads over a lost calculator. An eyewitness gave her account of how she saw a calculator similar to the lost one in the possession of the accused. The accused did not deny being in possession of the calculator but claimed she returned it. The class teacher asked the learner who sits in close proximity to the two learners to give his account. The learner said it was hard to tell since it was customary for the two learners to exchange stationery items. When the teacher is asked how she would reconcile the conflicting accounts, she responded that contradictions happen all the time because people have different view of events. The interpretation of events depends on 'where you are standing'. The approach that the class teacher took to understand the situation is reflective of qualitative approaches that depend on a phenomenological view (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 25). A phenomenological view requires a set of assumptions that are different from those used when the purpose of interpretation is to find facts and causes (Bogdan & Biklen). Researchers in a phenomenological mode attempt to understand reality by ascribing meaning to events and interactions to participants in particular situations.

Phenomenologists are located within the Weberian tradition, which emphasises 'Verstehen', the interpretive understanding of human action (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 25). They do not assume that they know what things mean to the people they are studying. Phenomenological inquiry begins with silence Psathas (1973), cited in Bogdan & Biklen. This 'silence' requires the researcher to act as if she or he does not know the meaning of the thing being studied so as to be able to find out what is taken for granted. Many research writers, when defining qualitative research, include some reference to 'understanding reality from a participant's perspective' (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 133; Johnson & Christensen, 2004: 370).

The phrase 'from a participants perspective' presents a problem, explains Bogdan & Biklen (2007: 26). 'Participants perspective' is not a phrase or expression participants use themselves. It may not represent the way they think of themselves. It is rather the way qualitative researchers approach their work: it is a research construct (Bogdan & Biklen). This construct requires researchers to intrude on the world of participants and have some conceptual scheme for this intrusion and subsequent interpretation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 333), accent to this intrusion by saying 'qualitative research is more likely to be personally intrusive than quantitative research'.

In this section, phenomenology is reviewed as a theoretical orientation. In some research textbooks, like Macmillan & Schumacher (2006: 315), Johnson & Christensen (2004: 370), and Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 135). Phenomenology is defined as a type of qualitative research design in the same class as ethnographic studies, grounded theory studies, critical studies and case studies. The reader is alerted to the fact that in this section phenomenology refers to the mind-set of a researcher that can be applied whether the design is a case study or a phenomenological study. Another mind-set that is relevant to this study is symbolic interaction, discussed below.

### **3.3.2 Symbolic interaction**

Symbolic interaction is compatible with the phenomenological view in that both perceive human experience as mediated by interpretation (Blumer, 1969, cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 27). The premise in the understanding of symbolic interaction is that in our experiences as participants in the world the researcher is trying to interpret that there are no absolutes. Because there are no absolutes, the researcher is bound to come up with different interpretations of similar experiences, events or even objects. For example, a victim of domestic violence has a different definition of a husband than a happily married wife. Curriculum managers may define a departmental meeting differently than an educator. An educator whose efforts are constantly praised at a departmental meeting experiences a departmental meeting differently than the one whose efforts are not recognised.



In a song, 'Summertime' (Taylor, *et al.*:1991), the Fresh Prince defines summer as a time of going all out and enjoying oneself with music and colourful scenery. He ends up by saying 'this is the Fresh Prince's definition of summertime'. Thus, the Fresh Prince took pains to define summer besides there being a universal definition of summer as a season in a year. He defines by how he interacts with people and how he interprets the symbols of the season. Therefore, should those conditions that he sings about be not met, to him, there would be no summer (Taylor, *et al.*: 1991).

Symbolic interaction believes that to understand behaviour we must understand definitions and the processes by which they are manufactured (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 27). Human beings interact to understand their world and ascribe meanings to events, processes and objects not on the basis of predetermined responses but as interpreters, and symbol and signal readers (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 27). These can be understood by having the researcher enter into the defining process through such methods as participant observation.

Likewise, in this study symbolic interaction is the conceptual paradigm in that curriculum management is studied as a complex process requiring interaction among role players in a way that ascribes new meaning to familiar concepts or processes.

### **3.4 Research design**

Simply stated, a research design refers to the specifics of data collection and analysis. Mouton (2005), cited in Edwards (2006: 53), describes the research design as a 'plan or blue print' of how the research should be conducted. Therefore this subsection, explains the process of data collection and analysis. The aim of this study is to gather information about curriculum leadership and management in the context of an academically successful rural secondary school. This study followed a case study design. In a case study design data collection and analysis focuses on one phenomenon, which the researcher is trying to understand (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). In this study, the phenomenon is curriculum management.

Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 135) recommend a case study design for learning more about a little known or poorly understood situation. Previous studies conducted on curriculum management suggested that in order for curriculum to be implemented successfully in South African schools, the management of the curriculum needs to improve (Labane, 2009). In another study, Shoba (2009), concluded that one of the barriers to effective curriculum management was that curriculum managers and supervisors at school level had only a superficial knowledge of the curriculum. This study aims to bridge that knowledge gap by documenting perceptions and experiences of curriculum managers and supervisors in the context of an academically successful rural secondary school.

### **3.4.1 Case study design**

A case study design focus on the in depth study of a particular program, individual, event or process for a defined period of time. The purpose of a case study as utilised in this study is in line with the views of Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 135). They state that the case study design is suitable for learning more about poorly understood situations and MacMillan & Schumacher (2006: 317) when they say that a single case study is suitable for investigating in depth small groups in a face to face interaction. A case is defined as a 'bounded' system (Johnson & Christensen, 2004: 376). The bounded system definition indicates that a case has complexities that the researcher must try to figure out. A system is a set of interrelated elements that form part of a whole. The system metaphor is used to define a case to show that it is a study of the interrelated elements functioning within their environments. It is bounded in that it must be 'measured' to indicate what elements form part of the case and those that are outside the boundaries of the case. This is how Robert Stake (1997), cited in Johnson & Christensen (2004: 376), unpacked the idea of a 'bounded system'. A case study is thus a detailed examination of a bounded system.

Bogdan & Biklen (2007: 59) illustrate the case study design as representing a funnel. The beginning of a study is the wide end of a funnel and the end of a study is the narrow end. This illustration suggests that a researcher choosing a case study design will start by considering a number of places or people that might be the source of data.

This number will narrow down as the researcher chooses the site, narrowing further down as the researcher chooses the participants. This narrowing continues as some participants are deemed information richer than others are. The end of the funnel is reached when collected data is sifted into ‘thick and rich’ descriptions of what actually happens in that particular setting. Having chosen a case study design presents the challenge of choosing a site that is information rich. Site selection is discussed in Section 3.4.2.

### **3.4.2 Site selection**

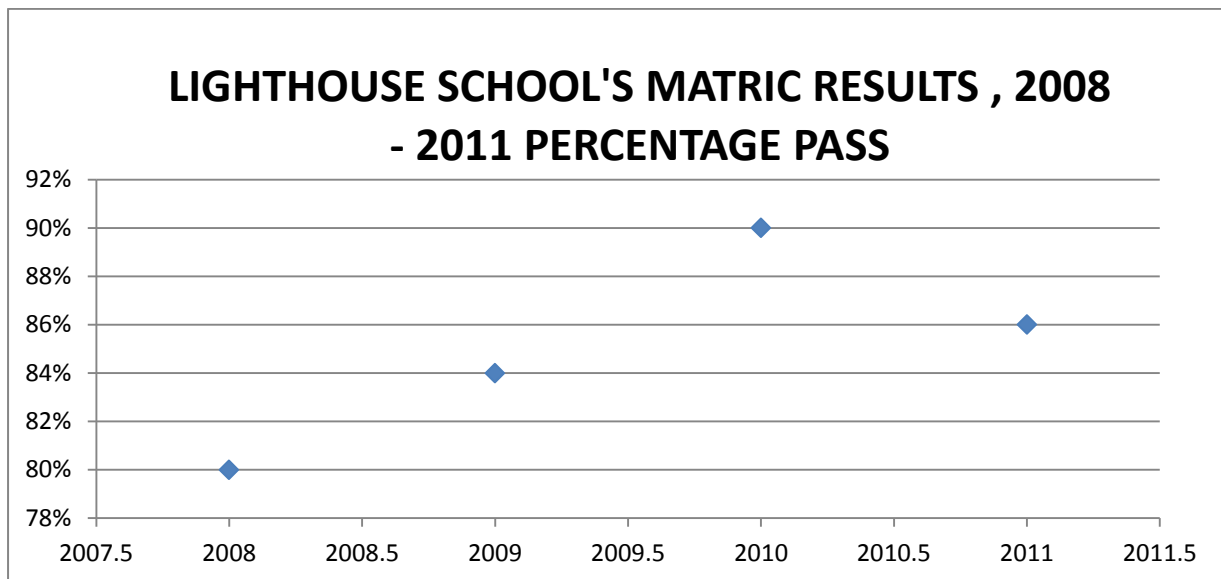
Bogdan & Biklen (2007:59) state that the first practical problem in a case study design is choosing a case. In choosing a case the researcher is faced with a dilemma of whether to choose a ‘special’ case or a typical case. One guide to choosing a case is whether a researcher wants the findings to be generalised to similar cases. If generalising is the aim a researcher then seeks a typical case. In this study, a special case has been opted for, of an academically successful rural secondary school. The reason for a special case is that in line with the theoretical orientation of this study, the consciousness and experiences of the school management concerning curriculum management needs to be described. This view is in line with Johnson & Christensen’s (2004: 364) views on phenomenology. The overriding factor in the choice of the case to be studied was the concept of ‘information rich’.

#### **3.4.2.1 The context of the case study school**

This study is a single case study conducted at a rural secondary school, referred to as ‘Lighthouse school’. Lighthouse school was selected purposefully because it fitted the profile that the researcher had predetermined to answer the research question. The researcher wanted a rural secondary school that showed consistent improvement in Matric results, whose

headship has not changed over the past three years. Lighthouse school fitted this profile. The school has consistently produced excellent Matric results since 2008. The current school head was appointed in 2006. The school boasts the following Matric percentage passes presented in the form of a scatter graph (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Lighthouse School's Matric Results 2008-2011**



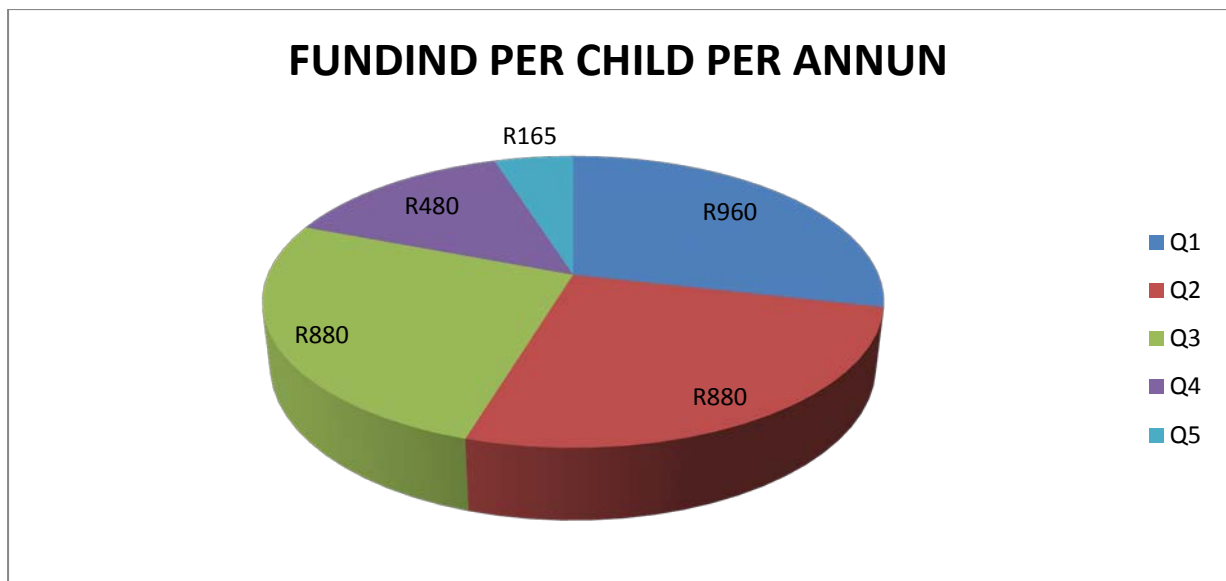
Prior to 2007 the school had a dismal history of poor performance. In 2005, the school was shamed by the District Curriculum Directorate as one of the schools in which curriculum management structures were found to be generally lacking. 2008 marked a change in the school's fortunes after the former school principal retired and the new one was appointed. This feat augurs well with answering the research question because it seems to suggest that the new management has worked hard to put a curriculum management structure in place.

### **3.4.2.2 Profile of the case study school**

Lighthouse school is situated in the Zululand district of KwaZulu-Natal. It is located in a rural area, kilometres away from tarred road and running water. It previously fell under the directorate of Vryheid district. Using the new structure that purports to demarcate the Department of Education in line with Local Municipal borders, falls under Zululand district.

Most of the schools in Zululand are rural schools facing a challenge of poor infrastructure and socio economic challenges like poverty, unemployment and high level of HIV or Aids. The Department of Education uses a quintile classification system to rank the schools according to their socio economic status. The quintile system ranks from quintile one to five, one being the poorest. The quintile classification system is also used to allocate funding. Presently, the quintile and funding allocation is as follows: Schools are in five groups, and receive funding based on the group they are in. The funding model is progressive, with poorer quintiles receiving more than wealthier quintiles. The funding model is presented in the form of Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Quintile and aunding allocation**



Source : [www.equaleducation.org.za](http://www.equaleducation.org.za)

Lighthouse school is a Quintile 1 no fee school. In a no fee school learners are not required to pay any school fees.

The school is secured with a high fence and is guarded by a security guard. The grounds are covered with grass that is neatly cut. There are two parallel blocks of classrooms and an administration block. Classrooms total fourteen in all. One classroom is used as a kitchen and another is used as a sawing room for consumer studies, the classrooms have a table, two chairs, a number of sitting desks arranged in traditional rows and a chalkboard. Almost all classes display charts and pictures of some kind. The toilet blocks are further removed from the school blocks. Despite having no running water, the school stores water in tanks for both drinking, sanitation and ablution.

### 3.4.2.3 Teaching and learning at the case study school

The following account of the context of teaching and learning at Lighthouse school was revealed during a casual conversation with the principal. Lighthouse school was once notorious for its poor performance, ill-discipline and laissez-faire type of leadership. In the period between 1997 and 2004, its Matric pass percentage never exceeded 28%. Official visits from both the district and circuit management lamented lack of systems to effectively manage teaching and learning. It was difficult to bring any sustainable change because the then principal was about to retire.

The fortune of the school has since turned around. This change in fortune started in 2005 when the current principal took over the headship of the school. In 2005, the school was able to achieve 56% passes in Matric. According to the principal, it was not difficult to work towards sustainable positive change because he knew what was wrong with the school having served as a deputy principal for two years before his appointment.

The school currently boasts the following profile:

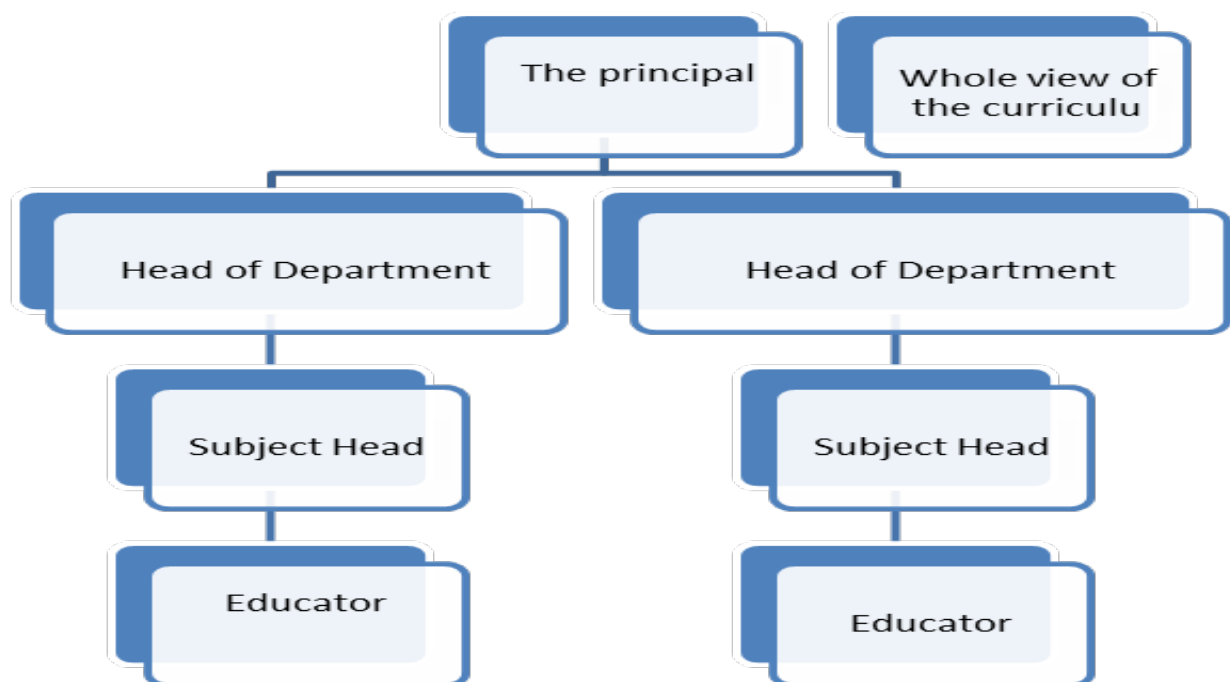
- Name of school: Lighthouse
- Enrolment: 422
- principal: 01
- Deputy-principal: none
- HODs : 02
- subject heads: 05
- Educators: 16
- Matric results for the past 4 years: 86% (2011); 90% (2010); 84% (2009); 80% (2008)

It is commendable that these excellent Matric passes came at the backdrop of a general decline in Matric passes because of the change in curriculum from NATED 550 to the NCS. During this period, even well performing schools lost a bit of ground due to the first NCS examinations in 2008.

#### 3.4.2.4 Curriculum management structure

The decline of enrolment at Lighthouse has been a challenge to the management of the school. The major blow was the loss of the post of the deputy principal. The deputy principal is usually the middle manager who has the greatest impact on teaching and learning. The school decided to eliminate the humanities learning stream, which meant that one HOD post was also lost. The new curriculum management structure is headed by the principal, supported by two heads of departments. Data collected from observation field notes is presented below in the form of a hierarchy to illustrate the new curriculum management structure.

**Figure 3: Curriculum Management Structure - Lighthouse school**



#### 3.5 Selection of participants

All the members of the SMT were selected as participants at first but upon arrival at the site a few problems were encountered. The school no longer had a deputy principal because of a declining PPN ratio. A number of unruly learners left the school because the new management structure turned up the heat on discipline, which resulted in diminishing learner



enrolment. Even though the school is now on the growth path, it had to sacrifice a deputy principal plus a few educators. The second problem was that one of the HODs was reluctant to participate in the study because she had just been appointed and was according to her words ‘not yet grounded’. This left only the principal and one HOD. Upon discussion with the principal, it appeared that the school has selected two senior educators as subject heads. These subject heads are part of the curriculum management structure. One subject head agreed to participate in the study.

### **3.5.1 Profile of participants**

The first participant interviewed was the principal of Lighthouse school. For the purpose of this study he will be called M B. M B is an experienced campaigner in education and has worked in three rural secondary schools since he began teaching in 1993. M B. is a middle-aged male who has a teaching experience of 19 years. He has been in management position for 12 years, having served as a departmental head, deputy principal and now as a principal. He is professionally qualified having studied and completed Senior Secondary Teachers Diploma (SSTD) and Bachelor of Pedagogic (B Paed) at the University of Zululand. He proceeded to do BA Honours in Linguistics at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and in 2004 he completed a Master’s degree in Education Leadership at Stellenbosch University.

The second participant interviewed was the departmental head in charge of Business, Commerce and Management learning stream. For the purpose of this study, he will be called Diligent. Diligent is a 30-year-old male who has been an educator since 2005. He has served in two schools, one a township school and now a rural school. Diligent was appointed in his first management position as a head of department in 2007. He never intended to be an educator but was forced into education after he failed to secure a job in the accounting profession after completing a National Diploma in Accounting at the University of Durban Technology in 2003. He does not regret joining the teaching profession and has since completed his professional qualification of a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 2007. In 2008 he completed a Bed Honours in Education Management at UNISA.

The third participant interviewed was the subject head for Mathematics. For the purpose of this study he will be called Africa. Africa is a foreign national from Ghana who arrived in South Africa in 2002. He first worked in the Eastern Cape in a Governing Body funded post and moved to KwaZulu-Natal in 2006. He has a teaching diploma from Ghana, an Advanced Certificate in Mathematics (ACE) from the University of the Transkei, and a BSc in Agricultural Science from UNISA.

He taught Mathematics and Agricultural Science at Lighthouse school since 2006. He was chosen for three reasons:

- During the interview with the principal it was discovered that the school has a good record in learner achievement in Mathematics.
- The school has a programme of networking with neighbouring schools in Mathematics that runs throughout all grades.
- Africa was the only subject head who could describe his role with ease in a casual conversation.

### **3.6 Data collection strategies**

Data collection strategy required further sampling within the site. Qualitative researchers draw their data from many sources, not only from a variety of people but from objects, textual materials, audio-visuals, and electronic records (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 144). A sample comprises of the particular people, objects, textual materials, audio-visuals, and electronic records actually selected.

Since the study focuses on curriculum management within a particular site, the principal and members of the SMT are regarded as the most appropriate respondents. Revealed by literature review in Chapter 2, curriculum management structures vary according to the size of the school. The benefits of the emergent nature of the qualitative design were used.

### **3.6.1 Data collection instruments**

Foreshadowed problems indicate the focus for data collection. Foreshadowed problems are typically broad phrased research questions about the participants (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 341).

This study aims to investigate how a selected academically successful rural secondary school manages the curriculum in an era of change. Data collection focused on one curriculum management site and was collected through the following instruments, as discussed in Chapter 3.6.1.1

.

#### **3.6.1.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Interviews were conducted with the participants to discover facts, motives, participants' beliefs and perspectives, present and past behaviours, standards for behaviours and why participants think a particular behaviour is desirable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 146). There are many types of interviews. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007: 349) state that the number of types of interviews given is frequently a function of the sources on reads. For instance, LeCompte & Preissle (1993) give six types, while Patton (1980) gives four, and Bogdan & Biklen (2007) outline eight. It is useful to classify interviews as either formal or pre-planned to a high level of detail or less formal with the fine details emerging once the researcher is in situ (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 355). The former type can be classified as a quantitative type while the latter is a qualitative type. This study being qualitative in nature is concluded to be interested.

According to Kvale (1996), cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007: 355), qualitative interviews set to achieve the following:

- Engage, understand and interpret the key feature of the life worlds of the participants. Life-world is the translation of the German term *Lebenswelt*, it refers to an individual's inner world of immediate experience (Johnson & Christensen, 2004: 364).
- Use natural language to gather and understand qualitative knowledge.
- Be able to reveal and explore the nuanced descriptions of the life worlds of the participants.
- Elicit descriptions of specific situations and actions, rather than generalities.
- Adopt a deliberate openness to new data and phenomena, rather than too structured.
- Accept the ambiguity and contradictions of situations where they occur in participants.
- Accept that the interview may provoke new insights and changes in the participants themselves.
- Focus on specific ideas and themes but avoid being too tightly structured.
- Regard interviews as inter personal encounter, with all that this entails.

Bearing in mind the above characteristics, a semi-structured interview was chosen for this study. The semi-structured interview uses a data collection guide that focuses on specific themes and ideas without being too structured. Thus, allowance is made for themes that will emerge as participants are probed.

The semi-structured interview is useful in a situation where the researcher needs to observe and interpret contextual factors that might have a bearing on the way the respondents react to the questions. This view is supported by Hoberg (1990: 90), cited by Sello (2009: 70), who state that this type of interview offers a face-to-face encounter in which people are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, feelings, and values than they would

in less human situation such as the close-ended questionnaire. The open-ended questionnaire could produce the desired results but was not opted for because participants have a tendency to want to respond intelligently, in an effort to please the researcher thus obscuring their perceptions in the process. It is even common for participants to seek the opinion of a trusted colleague when confronted with a question with which they are not comfortable.

The semi-structured interview was chosen on the basis of the congruence between the nature of this study, which is based on the phenomenological orientation, and the interview as a data collection method that allows the researcher to intrude on the life world of participants with a conceptual scheme to capture ‘participants meaning’.

An interview guide as set out in Annexure E was used to interview the school principal while Annexure F and G were used to interview the rest of the school managers.

### **3.6.1.2 Study of written documents**

For the purpose of this study, the following artefacts are deemed relevant because they contain records of communication between curriculum managers and their subordinates.

They also contain evidence that curriculum management activities do not happen at random but are planned, enacted and monitored.

#### ***Personal Documents***

These are first person narratives that describe an individual’s actions, experiences and beliefs (Dhlamini, 2008: 55). These documents include journals for preparation of departmental meetings, notes on lesson plans, and a departmental communication book belonging to the principal and Head of Departments.

### ***Official Documents***

These are policy documents developed at school level and include the following:

- The school's vision and mission
- Departmental policies
- Subject or Learning area policies
- Timetables
- Minutes of staff and departmental meetings
- Minutes of subject meetings
- Programme of assessment
- Year plan for curricular and extra-curricular activities
- Minutes for information sharing sessions

### ***Objects***

Objects are created symbols and tangible entities that reveal social processes, meanings and values (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 345). For the purpose of this study, the researcher will examine certificates and trophies awarded for academic achievement.

#### **3.6.1.3 Participant observation**

Participant observation is 'an active process which includes muted facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and other un-verbalised social interactions which suggest the meaning of language' (Macmillan & Schumacher cited in Dhlamini, 2008: 56).

The process entails a researcher engaged in a careful, systematic experiencing and conscious recording of details regarding many aspects of a situation (Dhlamini, 2008: 56). In short, the researcher notes how participants perceive reality, their words, their feelings and behaviour.

Participant observations will also focus on how the school organisation and culture contributes or hinders effective curriculum management. The observation of the SMT meetings and departmental meetings is likely to reveal important cultural factors that have a bearing on the school's organisation and culture. These meetings are likely to reveal inter alia, the power relations that prevail at such meetings, the mood of the participants and whether relations are strained or free.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 461). In short, this means that the researcher tries to make sense of data in terms of the participants' responses, noting themes, patterns, categories and regularities. A qualitative researcher interprets data by noting some things as significant and others as insignificant. There is no one single or correct way to interpret qualitative data. Each researcher interprets data according to its purpose and is guided by the kind of qualitative study undertaken (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 461). In a case study design, the data is most suitable written as a descriptive narrative. Likewise, in this study the data will be written as a descriptive narrative in order to describe, to summarise, to generate themes and to portray the participants' perspectives.

In line with the phenomenological orientation of this study, the analysis included a lot of verbatim conversations. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007: 462) state that verbatim conversations are important to keep the flavour of the original data. Data analysis and presentation was presented according to predetermined themes. Predetermined themes are preferred because the researcher's role as an interpreter and knowledge gathered from literature study and experience will render suitable interpretation. In qualitative research, new codes may emerge from data and these will not be overlooked.

### **3.7.1 Document analysis**

Document analysis is a non-interactive strategy with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participants (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 343). Document analysis includes artefacts. Artefacts are defined as tangible manifestations of the beliefs and behaviours that form a culture and describe people's experiences, knowledge, actions, and values (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 343).

## **3.8 Validity in qualitative research**

Validity in qualitative research is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the researcher and the participants (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 324). Dhlamini (2008: 58) defines validity as the extent to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomena between the researcher and the participants. Validity is a concept, which originated in discussions of experimental research and may not be relevant to qualitative research. Leedy & Ormrod (2005: 100) raises the issue of the relevance of 'validity' in qualitative designs and cites Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Cresswell (1998), who have suggested that the words such as "credibility", "dependability", "verification" and "transferability" to be used instead of "validity". This study employed the following strategies to enhance the credibility of its findings.

### **3.8.1 Triangulation**

The researcher used multiple sources of data (participant observation, document analysis and semi-structured interviews). Triangulation is the term borrowed by social sciences from the application of trigonometry to navigation and surveying to convey the idea that to establish a fact you need more than one source of information (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 115). Credibility will be enhanced if these multiple data sources converge onto consistent conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 155). Triangulation of data gives the researcher an opportunity to reconcile any material differences with the participants.



### **3.8.2 Thick descriptions**

In line with the phenomenological orientation of this study the findings were presented in sufficiently rich and ‘thick’ details in order to allow the readers to draw their own conclusions from the data presented (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 100). This strategy is referred to as verbatim accounts (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006: 325). These are word for word accounts of interviews, transcripts, and direct quotations from the documents recorded to illustrate participants’ meaning (Dhlamini, 2008: 61).

### **3.8.3 Low inference descriptors**

Low inference descriptors involve recording precise, almost literal and detailed description of people and situations. This information helps one to make informed judgments about whether findings from a particular study are useful in understanding other situations (Dhlamini, 2008: 61).

## **3.9 Ethical issues in qualitative research**

This study, being qualitative in nature, is likely to intrude on the personal space of participants. This view is supported by Macmillan & Schumacher (2006: 333) who state that qualitative research is likely to be more personally intrusive than quantitative research. Such ethical dilemma was averted by obtaining informed consent, confidentiality, right to privacy, and ensuring that no form of deception would be inflicted on participants.

### **3.9.1 Informed consent**

The nature of the study to be conducted was disclosed to participants and they were given a choice of either to participate or not to participate. A letter was addressed to all participants containing the following information (included as Annexure B, C and D):

- A brief description of the study.
- A description of what participation will involve, in terms of activities and duration which will be determined during a pilot study.
- A statement indicating that participation is on a voluntary basis and can be terminated at any time without penalty.
- A list of potential risks and discomforts that participants may encounter.
- The guarantee that participation will not hinder the core activities of a school.
- The guarantee that names and detail of all respondents will remain confidential and anonymous.
- An offer to provide detailed information about the study upon completion.
- A place for the participants to sign and date the letter, indicating agreement to participate.

### **3.9.2 Confidentiality and right to privacy**

Confidentiality agreed to through informed consent was further explained in a letter requesting permission to interview.

The letter explained that the name of the school was to be represented by a pseudonym Lighthouse School. Pseudonyms were also allocated to all the participants.

### **3.9.3 Deception of respondents**

Deception involves withholding information or offering incorrect information in order to ensure participation of respondents (Loewenberg & Dolgoff cited in Sello, 2009: 70). One way of ensuring that deception does not creep in is to keep checking with the participants to see if they are still comfortable with the research process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 154).

#### **3.9.4 Mechanically recorded data**

Permission was sought to use an audio recorder during in-depth interviews. An audio recorder may be considered as a third party who cannot see (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007: 112). It is thus important for the interviewer to take notes of non-verbal cues like gestures and estimating size with hands.

#### **3.10 Conclusion**

Chapter 3.10 discussed the research methodology as well as the design of this study. Further analysis of the biographical data of the site as well as participants will be the subject of Chapter 4. This information will be provided as a background to the analysis of data.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In Chapter 3, the research methods, theoretical orientation, research design and data collection techniques used in this study was discussed. In line with the research methodology employed in this study. This discussion entailed a focused discussion on qualitative research methods following a case study design. Phenomenology and symbolic interaction were discussed as the leading theoretical assumptions. Data collection strategies focusing on, in depth interviews; study of written documents and observation field notes were discussed. The study focussed on curriculum management at school level.

In Chapter 4, the focus is on data analysis and presentation. The three sets of data collection tools are initially presented independently. The idea is to inform the reader of the nature of the data that was analysed. Thereafter, the analysis is presented thematically using the themes and codes developed from the interview data.

### **4.2 Interview data**

#### **4.2.1 Analysis of interview data**

The interview transcripts of the recorded interviews are presented at the end of this report as Annexure I, J and K. Three participants were interviewed, the principal, Head of Department and subject heads. These participants conveniently represented three management levels identified in the curriculum management structure at the site. A diagram of the school's curriculum management site is included in Chapter 3.

The focus of the analysis was to see how the participants answered, *'How does a selected rural secondary school lead and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change?'*

#### 4.2.2 Themes from the interview data

The interviews with the principal, Head of Department and subject heads were transcribed, coded using predetermined codes, and arranged into broad themes which enabled the researcher to identify emerging patterns. The broad themes identified from the review of literature are presented in the form of a diagram.

**Table 4: Overview of themes and categories**

THEMES	CATEGORIES
Instructional Leadership Behaviour	Team Work  Effective Communication  Supportive Work Environment  Mentorship
Empowerment	Distributed Leadership  Regular Meetings  Power Relationships  Focus on Vision and inspiring subordinates  Shared Decision Making
Roles	Curriculum Management Objectives  View of Whole Curriculum  Executive Roles

	Operational Roles
Curriculum Change Interventions	Provincial Level Intervention  School Management Team  Departmental Level  Subject Specific Changes
Barriers to Effective Curriculum Management	Material Resources  Human Resources  Difficult Educators  Administrative Duties  Leadership Without Line Authority

### 4.3 Analysis of written documents

The researcher conducted a study of written documents that were collected from the site. Some documents were photocopied and others were perused at the site and important contents were noted. This was because documents like minutes of meetings contained confidential information that had no bearing on the topic of study. A study of written documents provided evidence that the school has a curriculum management structure that is active in planning, organising and controlling curriculum management tasks. This study was vital in answering two research questions. The first one is, “*What is the curriculum management role of the SMT?*” This question was answered by examining documents that evidenced that curriculum management activities are planned for in advance, deliberated on,

implemented and controlled. These documents revealed key curriculum management figures responsible for these activities. The second question is, “*How does school organisation and culture contribute towards effective curriculum management?*” This question was answered by examining documents for evidence of an organised curriculum management structure. Structure also reveals cultural issues at play in an organisation. For instance, one document may reveal unilateral decision-making whilst another may reveal shared decision-making.

#### **4.4 Observational data**

Observational data consist of data collected from the observation of two meetings. One was for the SMT conducted on 28-01-2013 and the other was a departmental meeting conducted on 06-03-2013. This study aimed inter alia to gain a greater understanding on how school leadership might influence curriculum delivery to the ultimate contribution to student achievement. Observing how these meetings are conducted assisted in answering three research questions. The first is, “*What is the instructional leadership role of the principal?*” Instructional leadership connects the principal to the classroom and therefore the researcher was able to observe how this is achieved through regular meetings.

The second is, “*What is the curriculum management role of the SMT?*” Both the meetings observed reflected elements of planning, organising, leading and control. These meetings were useful in revealing the curriculum management role of the SMT. The last question answered was, “*How does school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management?*” These meetings contributed valuable data that revealed power relationships at play when these meetings are conducted. The preparedness of the educators for such meetings confirmed that these meetings are indeed regular.

##### **4.4.1 Observation of meetings**

Two meetings were observed, one was an SMT meeting and the other was a departmental meeting for the department of Business, Commerce and Management. The first one took place on 28-01-2013 and the second was on 06-03-2013. The same observation instrument

was used for both meetings. This instrument is included in this report as annexure H. These observations were analysed using predetermined themes of instructional leadership behaviours, empowerment through distributed leadership and power relationships.

## **4.5 Theme 1: Instructional leadership behaviour**

This theme expounds the instructional leadership role of the principal. A number of instructional leadership behaviours were identified from the interview with the principal. This is further corroborated by extracts from a study of written documents and comments from observational field notes. Data, which support the instructional leadership theme, was further subdivided into five categories of teamwork, effective communication, supportive work environment, and mentorship.

### **4.5.1 Teamwork**

As an instructional resource, MB believes in assembling a team of managers and educators who are experienced and result focussed. His efforts are geared towards assembling an effective team as according to the following verbatim account, having a coherent team produces better results than concentrating on a host of administrative tasks.

*“Even if you have all these administrative tools in place but if you are not working the individuals..the people then you fail ,the school’s results might not improve even if you think it should because what you are focusing on are the instruments, administrative measures not the people but when the people are not in the mood and when they are not in the atmosphere that allows them to do their best, then they fail to do their best and the school does not improve”.*

Teamwork is not only promoted within the school but it is extended to all the stakeholders. MB goes out of his way to have networking relationship with targeted neighbouring schools. This is how he conveyed his networking efforts:



*“School clusters ... local teachers clustered together ... when they come together and discuss issues that pertain to certain subjects they get empowered. And even taking learners out to learn from the best educators in the subject, And for learners we ... we really ... take them to schools ... where they are good teachers or invite those teachers to come to our school”.*

Data collected from a study of written documents supports this argument. For instance there is a unique strategy of a partnership between Lighthouse school and school X. This partnership is in the teaching of mathematics. Through this partnership the two schools set assessment tasks jointly for all grades in mathematics, educators hold joint planning forums, and educators assist each other by exchanging places to teach the parts of mathematics they specialise on. This programme is unique to the two schools and ensures that learners benefit from specialised knowledge and skills. This programme was first reported in 12-03-2008 and has featured in most SMT meetings up to 2012. Collaborating with neighbouring schools is not only limited to mathematics education but to all subjects and this programme deserves special report because of its success and sustainability.

#### **4.5.2 Effective communication**

**MB** stresses the importance of communication with all the stakeholders. To achieve effective communication, he accents leadership above management. The following verbatim account illustrates this point:

*“My role basically is leadership... that is what I believe in. I believe in leadership even more than management”.*

According to **MB** communication involves talking to all the major stakeholders as stated in the following verbatim account:

*“Communication involves talking to the parents, the SMT, the teachers, the learners, the representative council of learners all these people must know what is expected of them, what makes a good school”.*

That MB clearly values communication of the broad vision and mission of the school and involves stakeholders is supported by evidence presented in the minutes of the SMT meeting where it was recorded that the school plan must be sent to all stakeholders for their comments before being finalised. Data from the observation of meetings supported this argument in that the observer noted vivacious interactions in departmental meetings.

Issues of contention were not easily resolved as subordinates are quite vocal and expressive of their desires.

Data collected from the following documents supports the claim that the principal relies on effective communication.

### ***School vision and mission***

The vision of the school is to encourage love of teaching and learning in both teachers and learners. The document is used as the starting point of instructional leadership because the principal constantly refers to it at SMT meetings. This statement is supported by interview data and analysis of SMT meetings which both reveal that the principal believes that his role is to drive the mission and vision of the school.

### ***School year plan***

A school year plan contains a list of all scheduled school activities chronologically arranged into four quarters. Instructional activities feature prominently in the school's year plan. Assessments, moderation, checking and signing report cards, educational excursions, and addressing year mark queries are included in the year plan. This seems to indicate that curriculum is the core function performed by school managers. This document is used as both a planning and a control tool in that it is prepared in advance, communicated by displaying it prominently in all offices and can be referred to in order to check whether that planned activity was carried out.

### 4.5.3 Supportive work environment

Another instructional leadership behaviour that emerged from the interviews is that of developing a supportive working environment. The principal supports educators particularly in matters of discipline. This has been the focus of the management team because the school has a history of ill-discipline. This threat had to be removed for instructional matters to improve in the classroom. This is how the principal stated this point:

*“So you create a culture by making everybody know what is a good or a normal school and make everybody see and be able to compare themselves and see if they are doing below, standard or above standard and so we all strive to create a culture of teaching and a culture of learning and make everything else directed ... gets directed towards achieving that goal where it’s easy to teach, it’s easy to learn and everybody enjoys that atmosphere, is free from any threats. When you involve everybody the atmosphere can be free from any threats because everybody who comes close to the institution knows what is expected ... what is done there and even the outsiders begin to respect what we are doing at school because they can see that these are people with a direction, these are people with a vision, these are people who know what they are doing and so the culture of the school is very good by now and by the time when I started as a principal the culture was not really that good. Learners were so unruly and so ill disciplined and late coming was just normal and by now they are no late comers and pupils, learners abide by the school rules and they are no problems actually and that is what makes teaching easy for teachers. They teach with ease, they don’t struggle because they do not struggle with much of discipline, they only get to class and deliver the matter and they enjoy the interaction between themselves and their children. This is the culture that is conducive for teaching and learning and this is what makes the school runs smoothly”.*

Diligent also responded in line with the principal's comments when asked about the support he receives from the principal in teaching and learning. The following is his verbatim account:

*“Even if I am experiencing problems with a teacher I just simply report it to the principal, even if we have a problem with school discipline with the learners we report to the principal and then we receive full support from him”.*

#### **4.5.4 Mentorship**

Another instructional leadership strategy that emerged from the interviews is that of mentorship. MB believes in mentoring educators mainly because the school faces a challenge of unqualified and underqualified educators. MB commented that the educators that are mentored by the school produce far better results than those who are qualified. MB sources mentors from within and outside the school. Interview data revealed that the principal is proactive in establishing networking relationship with targeted neighbouring schools. The analysis of meetings revealed that the school invites specialists from outside to conduct training workshops within the school.

This value system has permeated to the individual departments as projected by this strategy used by the commercial department:

*“I also ensure that as a head of department ,we have a mentor for the department who is assisting in terms of discipline because you can find that even if the educator is experienced but most of them are experiencing the problem of disciplining the learners. Therefore, I ensure that we appoint a mentor who is going to assist in that particular aspect. And also I ensure that as the head of department I keep on organising workshops for developing the educators in various aspects in particular say ... in classroom management, we organise a facilitator who is going to ensure that we assist the educators to develop them about those particular areas”.*

It was also evident in an interview with the subject head for Mathematics:

*“What we usually do is that we call the subject meetings so that the educators ... we try to see where they may have some problems, maybe you can realize that the educator is very good in one area and another one is not very good in that area so in that case we try to negotiate something we call it something like link ... or networking ... there is the term ... networking so that the educator who is in grade 10 maybe I’m in grade 11 but this educator is not well versed with the certain topic or is having a problem ... either you help the educator to go to the classroom or sometime he may invite you to go to the classroom”.*

## **4.6 Theme 2: Empowerment**

It was noted in the reflective field notes that the principal shunned away from stating his management functions. He would always drive the question to leadership. The HOD was clear in every management element of planning for effective instruction, organising instructional experiences, and control and monitoring these experiences. The principal has invested a lot of time on empowerment and as such he is able to ‘take his eyes off the ball’ without compromising teaching and learning. Empowerment in the context of this study means enabling both curriculum managers and educators to deliver the curriculum with minimum supervision. The empowerment theme was further subdivided into categories of distributed leadership, regular meetings, power relationships, focus on vision and inspiring subordinates and shared decision-making.

### **4.6.1 Distributed leadership**

In the context of this study, distributed leadership means the sharing of leadership functions so that the school does not lack directions even in the absence of the principal. Distributed leadership works well within an environment where people are empowered as demonstrated by the presence of the principal in departmental meetings in which he is a follower. The following comments illustrate this point:

*“At times I do call meetings myself and become part where we talk about the curriculum we talk about the subjects with those teachers concerned and that’s where you get to see where you are driving your vehicle to if there are things that are not right on the way you diagnose very them quickly if you do that but if you don’t call those meetings then you don’t make space for a dialogue about the curriculum then curriculum improvement becomes such a huge impossible task”.*

The mood in these meetings is revealed by such comments as ‘I become part’, meaning he does not drive the meeting to achieve only his goals and an emphasis of ‘we’. This observation was also recorded when the SMT meeting was observed. The principal took the lead in all the broad areas and became a follower when the specifics of planning, organising and control issues were discussed. I would like to stress that he became a follower, not an onlooker. When a leader becomes a follower it throws some light into the type of distributed leadership applied by the school. It means more there is more than the sharing of leadership functions. It means that roles are reversed for the sake of accomplishing an educational activity.

The hierarchy is turned upside down in order to accomplish certain tasks. In some cases where distributed leadership is not practiced senior managers merely delegate leadership functions to their subordinates mainly because the leader is over loaded with duties. The leader does not even have time to participate on those activities he has offloaded. As a result those subordinates do not feel empowered. This is important in the context of this study because distributed leadership is not an end in itself but a means to empowerment.

Distributed leadership is also demonstrated in the relationship between HOD’s and subject heads. Heads of Departments have a number of subjects under their administration. For instance an HOD for the science stream manages Physical Science, Mathematics, Life Science, CAT, Agricultural Science, Natural Science and Technology. He may have taught Physical Science and Natural Science most of his life and may not be equipped to manage

Mathematics. Empowering the subject head to manage and advise him on all matters concerning Mathematics becomes a practical and worthwhile solution. This is how this relationship is expressed in the following extract:

*“The head of the department normally ... like in our school he is the head of mathematics, physical science, life sciences, that means all the sciences; so the HOD may not be having all the aspects of these sciences. So what we normally do ... like me as a mathematics educator; I normally guide the HOD so that in terms of mathematics to ensure that everything in terms of the curriculum is well monitored for an example I check that the tests submitted by the educators are representative of all the levels in line with Blooms’ taxonomy”.*

The **HOD accent with the subject heads** on how and why he is appointed, empowerment is the main objective as demonstrated in the following extract:

*“In our department, we have four learning subjects which is Accounting, Economics, Business studies as well as Economic and Management Sciences. I ensure that amongst the educators of my department, I appoint subject heads, who are going to monitor the work of junior educators as well as the quality of the tasks given to learners”.*

Provisionally, although the subject head is not paid for these management duties he is being prepared for a curriculum management position.

This trend of collaborative effort has helped the school build an effective curriculum management structure. This structure rests on the pillars of a strong team of educators, effective communication, capacity building through networking and empowerment.

The principal, the subject advisors and circuit management supports this structure even hands on as it is evident from the following comments by the **HOD**, when asked if he received support from anyone in the management of curriculum changes, he stated three sources:

*“I can say yes because if I experience any problems ... I can phone the subject advisors to ask even for assistance, ... also receive support from the principal because if we are experiencing problems and also from the circuit management we also receive support because if we are asking support to say, for an example from the principal, if he can’t give the support he tries by all means to get somebody who can come in and assist us on that particular problem”.*

#### **4.6.2 Regular meetings**

Regular meetings feature prominently in all the three interviews. These meetings are conducted at different levels. In order to distil further analysis from rich textual data contained in the minutes of the meetings contents were analysed thematically using predetermined categories of curriculum coverage, curriculum changes, opportunity to learn, empowerment and resource allocation. These minutes cover the school year 2009 to 2012. The choice of these years was automatic because the minute’s book reflected those years. In 2009 six SMT meetings were held all included curriculum management on the agenda. In 2010 five SMT meetings were held all included curriculum management on the agenda. In 2011 six SMT meetings were held and all included curriculum management on the agenda. In 2012 eight SMT meetings were held and seven included curriculum management on the agenda. Departmental meetings were consistently held twice per quarter since 2009. This suggests that the SMT is consistent in holding these meetings. In all three years, out of 25 meetings all but one discussed curriculum management. This suggests that the school prioritises curriculum management.

It is significant to observe some of these meetings in order to judge whether they really empower the educators. The following emerged from the two meetings observed.



The principal took lead and clearly articulated the value of regular meetings. He commands respect and influence among the SMT. He demonstrated behaviour that is consistent with instructional leadership. He focused the meeting on what is happening in the classroom. For instance the first item on the agenda was, “*Review of the first ten days of schooling*”. This issue was discussed for thirty-five minutes. Almost all the participants had something to report concerning the first ten days of schooling. A firm concluded the issue request to the HOD’s to check and sign the learners work books as a confirmation that teaching and learning was productive during the first ten days. The HOD’s were to report to the principal on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. Again when school functionality was discussed the emphasis was on the classroom.

The HOD’s were concerned about the instructional programme of the school. They raised issues about resources. Grade 11 CAPS books have not been received, and one experienced accounting educator had given resignation notice. His replacement was discussed at length. The principal reported that he has reached an agreement with him to assist the school during weekends. The subject headswere quiet most of the time during the SMT meeting but were deeply involved in the departmental meeting which focused on progress reports concerning monthly tests and formal tasks. It was later learned that the subject headsare not normally part of SMT meetings. The principal decided late the previous year to invite them in order to increase capacity.

#### **4.6.3 Power relationships**

In an environment where regular meetings are a norm, it is important to study power relationships that exist in such meetings. These power relationships are an indicator of empowerment. Observing power relationships at play during a meeting is both interesting and productive. It breathes life to the bulk of minutes that have been studied and analysed. Power scales were tilted in favour of the principal and one HOD. This is because the second HOD is inexperienced and is a female.

The two subject heads were quiet during the SMT meeting but were quite vocal and decisive during the departmental meeting. In a departmental meeting, the power scales are not in favour of the HOD. His subordinates are vocal and are quick to oppose him.

In the opinion of the researcher, it is because he is both pushy and authoritative and there appears to be collusion against him to neutralise his authoritarian leadership style.

He was at times frustrated when he failed to close issues concerning submission times. This confirmed that the educators are leaders in their subjects. This observation means that empowerment is indeed a leadership strategy employed at the school.

#### **4.6.4 Focus on vision and inspiring subordinates**

From the interviews conducted with the HOD and subject head it appears that these middle level and junior level managers have been empowered to work towards a common vision of the school. This is how the principal elucidated this point in response to a question, how does teaching and learning proceed in your absence?

*“Most principals are so concerned with controlling and monitoring and that’s what makes teaching not to proceed when they are not there but I believe in empowerment and I believe in leadership where you empower people and inspire people and let people work towards a vision not towards you”.*

The principal sees his role as that of a captain of a ship who makes his crew see what needs to be done. Affirming the importance of clarifying the vision and inspiring subordinates MB states:

*“My role basically is to make clear the vision, the mission and inspire people, motivate people to accomplish what is set as a vision of the school”.*

This belief system features strongly in this interview in that every time mention is made of vision and empowerment, MB would lean forward to emphasise this point. The vision of the school is not only communicated to the educators but to all the stakeholders as elucidated by the following extract:

*“As I have said it starts ... it all starts with a vision, a clear vision, a clear mission and the goals set and creating an environment a conducive environment with all parties involved talking to the parents, the SMT, the teachers, the learners, the*

*representative council of learners all these people must know what is expected of them, what makes a good school”.*

The analysis of the minutes of the meetings corroborate that MB has a strong reliance on casting the vision as a means of empowerment not only of the educators but also of all the stakeholders.

For instance, at an SMT meeting held on 13-03-2008, it was decided to give all stakeholders (educators, parents and learners) a chance to examine the contents of the year plan and comment thereof before making it final. Parents play a leading role in monitoring weekend and holiday classes. This is done to inspire them and to give them a sense of ownership

Educators are developed within the school by conducting workshops where outsiders are invited to facilitate such workshops. Each educator has a personal development plan. Those who are unqualified or under qualified are motivated to complete their studies at recognised educational institutions. A record of a school function to celebrate excellence appears yearly in the minutes of the SMT. During this function the school awards both learners and educators. Local businesses pledge their financial support and prominent people are invited as motivational speakers. The following extract validates this finding:

*“In our celebration of excellence we have invited Mr J a senior official in Agricultural and environmental Affairs, and Mr B a local business man now based in Durban and the schools former learners. SMT meeting 18-03-2010”.*

Again, there is a unique empowerment strategy at the school. This strategy is called ‘pep talk’. Pep talk is a face-to-face conversation between the principal and selected learners. These learners are selected on both ends of the continuum; the top achievers and the low achievers. Academic and career prospective considered is addressed. Under achievers are encouraged to work hard. The minutes of the SMT meeting dated 15-02-2010 state:

*“this is aimed at the upliftment of their performance.”*

There are records of learners attending career guidance workshops as early as at Grade 9 level. These workshops are not funded by the Department of Education; the school pays R15.00 per learner for these workshops. These findings suggest that the management of Lighthouse school is proactive and innovative in empowering stakeholders. All these efforts point to excellent instructional leadership on the part of the principal.

#### **4.6.5 Shared decision-making**

Decision-making is shared among the role players. The principal's democratic management style allows HOD's to call meetings on their own, to come up with suggestions. The parents are also invited to have input in the school's year plan, become part of holiday classes and participate in school functions. Learners are to a certain extent also recognised as leaders in that their input is sought in drawing up a school plan and they are represented by the Representative Council of Learners.

A study of the minutes of meetings strengthens the claim that important decisions are shared. For instance the schools budget *allocation* is openly discussed at the SMT meeting. The following extract illustrates this point:

*“School allocation and budget R310 511.00. 60 is for textbooks and stationery, 40~ is for non LTSM. 50~ of these funds will be received in July” SMT Meeting 18-07-2011.*

This is a demonstration of transparency in the allocation of resources at the school. Further records of budgetary decisions are contained in the minutes.

The SMT also discusses the allocation of human resources openly at their meetings. For example, Curriculum Vitae of prospective educators are assessed at SMT meeting when there is a vacancy to be filled. The relevant HOD is allowed to make the final choice in case applicants' scores are tied.

#### **4.6.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, Lighthouse school values empowerment through distributed leadership, holding regular meetings, balanced power relationships, focus on vision and inspiring subordinates and sharing important decisions. In this school, there are leaders without positions. They add capacity to the management team, which suffered loss of a key position when the Deputy principal's post was lost due to the downsizing of the school.

The effective use of subject heads by virtue of their knowledge, the fact that followers are given the opportunity to lead, and the use of regular meetings both as a planning tool and control tool exemplifies Lighthouse as true advocates of distributed leadership.

The next theme to be discussed highlights that while curriculum management is the responsibility of the principal and his management team; their roles differ and complement one another. While the principal cast the vision for the whole school, the HOD's are the foot soldiers who take the vision to the battle arena, which is the classroom. If these roles are well coordinated, the principal can have time to lead the school and be innovative without compromising the management task of planning, organising, leading and control.

### **4.7 Theme 3: Curriculum management roles**

This theme outlines the actions and activities of curriculum managers at school level as they go about to secure improvements in curriculum delivery. This theme was subdivided into three categories of curriculum management objectives, a view of the whole curriculum, executive roles and operational roles.

#### 4.7.1 Curriculum management objectives

Interview data from the principal and the HOD revealed important patterns about the curriculum management objectives of the school.

Firstly, from the interview data with the principal, the researcher established his meta-orientation because anyone managing the curriculum is in fact curriculum theorising. This was important for this study because it reveals the objectives that the school is trying to attain. The following comments allowed the researcher to make this claim:

*“The main reason that the school exists is to teach and so you can’t separate curriculum from this mission. Curriculum is the centre of everything so there is no need for the principal if the school is going to underperform”.*

*There is no need for any position if the school is going to underperform so the basic reason why the school exists is to teach so curriculum is my first and foremost responsibility if nothing goes well with the curriculum then nothing goes well with everything in the school so that’s what I consider to be my central role”.*

These comments are indicative of that the principal uses a factory metaphor to define his curriculum management role. The use of a factory metaphor seems to suggest that the principal prioritises teaching and learning because his main objective is to produce a good product.

This argument is supported by data collected from an analysis of minutes of meetings which reveals that the school strives to increase learning opportunities. Minutes of the SMT record that a school has a strategy to increase learning opportunities. There are records of discussions concerning morning and evening classes, winter classes and networking sessions with neighbouring schools. In addition to these learning opportunities, the school has a unique strategy called ‘camping’. Camping was introduced in 2009. During camping, Grade 12 learners stay in the schools premises from Friday to Sunday afternoon. Teaching and

learning continues day and night. The school provides refreshments from a pool of funds donated by the parents. Parents volunteer to cook and sleep with the learners for the duration of the camp.

The camp is extended to the whole week during quarterly holidays. The following was recorded about the camp:

*“Mr M. will ensure that water is available before Monday. Mrs M. and Z. will be requested to lead in food preparation, for outside learners, will pay R500 each. SMT meeting 22-06-2012”.*

While these camps attracted neighbouring schools especially for the school holiday camps, there is evidence that such schools are carefully chosen to eliminate schools:

*“... whose work ethos do not correspond with ours.” principal SMT meeting 18-03-2010*

Camp activities are reviewed after each camp. Challenges are identified and deliberated on. For instance the following camp review was recorded:

*“Camp activities went accordingly though some subjects, Economics and Life Sciences were not covered. All full time learners attended the camp”. SMT meeting 08-10-2012*

The effectiveness of such camp is measured by follow on assessment:

*“A two hour long period will be allocated for each subject. The test (previous question papers), will be written to check the level of pass rate for each learner.”*  
SMT meeting 08-10-2012

Another unique strategy is a partnership between Lighthouse school and school X. This partnership is in the teaching of mathematics. Through this partnership the two schools set assessment tasks jointly for all grades in mathematics, educators hold joint planning forums, and educators assist each other by exchanging places to teach the parts of mathematics they specialise on. This programme is unique to the two schools and ensures that learners benefit from specialised knowledge and skills. This programme was first reported in 12-03-2008 and has featured in most SMT meetings up to 2012.

#### **4.7.2 A view of the whole curriculum**

Initially, when I read and reflected on my interview with the principal, I thought that I was not hearing what I expected to hear. When asked about his management activities or actions, the principal would always drift to his leadership role. He was very defensive of his position and would use phrases such as ‘as I have said it’ and ‘I pay more attention to’, to consolidate his position. The HOD and subject heads were clear and articulate in defining their actions and activities. It then dawned on me; that this must be the result of different perceptions about curriculum management roles.

In all the interviews conducted with the curriculum managers it emerged that even though they all manage the curriculum, their roles differ.

In this study the evidence suggests that there is direct involvement of the principal, Heads of Department and subject heads in curriculum management; *albeit* at different angles. For instance, this is what the MB said about his involvement:

*“As I have said it all starts with a vision; a clear vision, a clear mission and the goals set and creating an environment a conducive environment with all parties involved talking to the parents, the SMT, the teachers, the learners, the representative council of learners all these people must know what is expected of them, what makes a good school”.*



This comment suggests that the principal has a view of the whole curriculum, driving the purpose of the school. The Head of Department is in the management function of planning, organising, leading and controlling curriculum delivery.

#### **4.7.3 Executive roles**

While the principal oversees, the Heads of Departments execute. The HOD's are directly involved in the curriculum management activities of planning, organising, leading and control. When asked about his role in curriculum delivery, Dilligent's comments revealed the for management principles as follows:

*“Planning: We start by calling the meeting for all the educators of the department, where we set a programme, in particular ... where we set dates for submitting files ... dates for submitting their daily prep and also to remind them about their tasks, what is expected of them... and also to give them sort of workshops on particular subjects and also ensure that at the end of the day they indeed know what is expected from them as educators.*

*Organising: Ja, in our department, as we have actually ... if I can say we have four learning subjects which is Accounting, Economics, Business studies as well as Economic and Management Sciences. I ensure that amongst the educators of my department, I appoint subject heads, who are going to monitor, who are going to work closely with those educators in particular those who are inexperienced to assist them.*

*Leading: As a head of department I ensure that my educators who are serving under my department are well developed in order to be able to offer a professional service.*

*Control: Ja, I think my major role is to ensure that the school functions very well ... I actually supervise if I am not in class I ensure that I supervise around the school to check the learners who are outside the school and also to check that all the educators have actually attended ... or have actually went to the classes and also to ensure that those who are nor actually in classes”.*

In the context of this study the above comments confirm that the HOD's are fulfilling the executive role in the management of curriculum delivery.

Data from a study of written documents affirms this point. The following documents revealed that the HOD's are responsible for implementation and control of teaching and learning activities.

### ***Programme of assessment***

This document is a schedule of all formal assessment activities planned for the whole year. This is a good curriculum management tool showing that departments collaborate in drawing it.

### ***Attendance registers***

The researcher examined learners' class attendance registers, educators' class attendance registers, extra classes' learners' attendance registers, and registers that record the control of educators' work. All these registers are well controlled at fixed intervals. A school date stamp is affixed as evidence of control and monitoring. Head of Departments also add their comments and recommendations.

### ***A schedule of class visits***

The principal keeps a register of scheduled class visits. There is evidence that class visits are scheduled for the whole year. This register is both a planning and a control tool in that the dates are planned for in advance and the HOD's sign and place their comments on the same register after these visits have been carried out.

There is evidence that class visits are regular and are used for developmental purposes. In 2010 thirty class visits were planned for the year and twenty two were carried out as planned. In 2011 thirty class visits were planned and twenty six were carried out as planned. In 2012 thirty class visits were planned and twenty four were carried out as planned.

### ***IQMS Files***

Integrated Quality and Management System (IQMS) is a performance appraisal system used by the Department of Education nationwide to both appraise and develop educators. Each educator has a development plan. It was interesting to note that for unqualified and under-qualified educators this plan included how they progressed in the pursuit of their professional qualifications.

### ***A plan to control teaching and learning***

This is a strategic document to control teaching and learning activities. It contains scheduled dates and specifies the manager responsible for each activity. These activities include inter alia, the control of learners work, pre and post moderation of tasks, class visits and IQMS. This document specifies the people responsible for each curriculum management activity and was the key document in helping the researcher to draw a school's curriculum management structure included in Chapter 3.

### ***Departmental policies***

This document covers all strategic decisions of each department and outlines the vision and goals thereof. This document serves as the overall operational plan of each department. The three departmental policies that were examined varied in detail. The policy for the department of commerce was the most detailed. It contained targets for each subject, retrieval policy for textbooks; stationery requirements for each subject, as well as guidelines for inter personal relationships within the department.

### ***Curriculum coverage***

Both the SMT meetings and departmental meetings adequately address curriculum coverage. In SMT meetings HODs take turns to report on curriculum coverage for the subjects under their jurisdiction. These reports emphasise Grade 12 work schedules. The only other instance where curriculum coverage was recorded is for Grade 9 common task for assessment.

Evidence presented in the SMT meetings indicates that curriculum coverage is a priority for classes who are assessed externally.

At departmental level reports on the progress made towards the completion of work schedule is equally reported by each educator for all the subjects. Remedial action is proposed for those educators who are behind in their work. The following extract from the departmental meeting indicate that curriculum coverage is well coordinated:

*“Learners must be given enough activities to show that the work has been covered and can be tested. It is hard for me to believe that the work has been covered if it does not appear in the learners work book, even though the work schedule is signed. Departmental meeting 18-03-2010”.*

#### **4.7.4 Supportive roles**

Interview data revealed that the school has an effective use of subject heads, who function in a supportive role. They function in both the line authority as supervisors and in staff authority as subject specialists and advisors. The following comments reveal the supervisory role of the subject heads:

*“ I ensure that amongst the educators of my department, I appoint subject heads, who are going to monitor the work of educators, who are going to work closely with those educators in particular those who are inexperienced to assist them”.*

And their advisory role:

*“Like I said, at first, the head of the department normally ... like in our school he is the head of mathematics, physical science, life sciences, that means all the sciences so the HOD may not be having all the aspects of these sciences. So what we normally do ... like me as a mathematics educator. I normally guide the HOD so that in terms of mathematics everything in terms of the curriculum is well monitored”.*

This seems to indicate that the management of Lighthouse school has taken active steps to strengthen the capacity of their management team by including subject heads. This capacity is further strengthened by the inclusion of parents in supervisory capacity and food handling as revealed by the minutes of meetings. The minutes of the meetings revealed that when the school conducts camp activities to extend learning opportunities, parents are involved as supervisors and food handlers.

#### **4.7.5 Conclusion**

This theme revealed interesting patterns about the curriculum management role of the SMT. Curriculum managers seem to fulfil different roles which are largely complementary.

The principal spoke in a demeaning way of control and monitoring when he said that most principals focus on the control instruments at the expense of the people and as such the teaching does not proceed smoothly in their absence. This seems to be important for this study because it was motivated by the fact that the capacity of schools to manage the curriculum was questioned due to a number of aborted attempts at curriculum implementation. If different role players do not fulfill these roles and they do not complement one another, it would be difficult if not impossible to manage the curriculum. After all a single figure, cannot singlehanded monitor and control teaching and learning activities, no matter how imposing.

#### **4.8 Theme 4: Curriculum change intervention**

The school manages curriculum change at four levels. First, at the level of school governance; where changes are shared with the School Governing Body (SGB). This level is regarded as superficial.

At the school management level changes are shared with the educators as stated in the following comments by the principal:

*“Curriculum change is what we live with these days. They are constant changes, now and again, now and again but my role basically is to make those changes welcome to the educators. It is not to come screaming about it saying here they are new changes again and they are frustrating us this and that. Is to make the change something very friendly to teachers and make teachers friendly to any change”.*

The actions of the school managers are crucial in ensuring that change is adopted by the school. This required a platform to deliberate. In the words of the principal:

*“... to talk about it and put flesh on it ...”*

The third level requires the departmental heads to take it further to their respective departments and implement the change. Training is usually brokered if the situation calls for such training and people who have attended workshops are required to report back in a meeting the implications of the workshop to the practice of curriculum delivery. The following extract from the interview with the HOD elucidates this point:

*“The person who have been able to attend or who is well versed with ... who actually have enough information about ... comes and facilitate such workshop to the educators so that the educators will be able to know about that particular change which is about to be implemented”.*

The fourth level requires the subject heads to manage subject specific changes, especially those relating to a change in contents. This is common to CAPS. The subject head states:

*“ If you take something like mathematics, in the NCS there were some topics which are now in CAPS, which were not in the NCS. So these changes are specific to mathematics ... so what we do is we normally take the old and new policy documents compare them and identify changes so that in terms of delivery we don't deliver the old ones and leave out the new ones. So that we can do all these changes ... like I'm saying the teacher may have been teaching the old one, he is not good on the new one so we normally do this try to guide each other in terms of subject specific”.*

Diligent was not pleased with the strategy employed by the department. He had this to say:

*“But what I think is becoming a problem is that when there is a curriculum change that is about to be implemented, we are not actually being invited as managers to come and attend some workshops where we will be developed about that particular change but they keep on ... or they just call the educators who are your subordinates to be developed or work-shopped about the curriculum where you find that at the end of the day the people who are well versed with the curriculum change are the educators of which you as a manager need to manage them which tends to be very difficult for the departmental heads to monitor the task of the learners which result to the fact that the implementation of the curriculum doesn’t in fact go as it is expected”.*

The principal was equally disappointed with the intervention of the department:

*“I don’t think we really get enough support. Like in the issue of ... CAPS now ... the department gave the responsibility to people who were inadequately trained to workshop teachers on CAPS and they were inadequately trained themselves and that’s why the workshops were not so much of a success and because ... in fact union and union leaders took the initiative to introduce CAPS and that is where it all went wrong and I think if the department does things ... if they introduce change they do things like this then we will always have a problem but if people who are knowledgeable and skilled in whatever change come then it’s easy for teachers to get what they are supposed to get and embrace whatever change because at the end of the day whatever change, if we do not get enough support that change does not become effective”.*

Curriculum changes sometimes necessitate a change in structures in order to accommodate the change. The principal and HOD differed when asked if there has been any proposal to change school structures because of curriculum changes. This is the response of the principal:

*“Yes, of course, because of curriculum change at times you change the structures that are there in order for the structures to be suitable for the implementation of the changes that are there. So you can’t remain with the same structures if they is a*

*change that's coming it demands that you change also the structures you see to it that the structures that are in place are well able to ensure that the changes that are there are effected correctly".*

The Head of Department responded that these curriculum changes challenge certain aspects of the curriculum. It is possible to accommodate them using present structure:

*"Not really that there has actually proposed any changes but what I can say is that they challenge some of the aspects of the curriculum but not necessary formally imposing a particular change but they give some suggestions".*

A study of written documents suggests that curriculum management structure has changed with the addition of subject heads. The appointment of subject heads was motivated by a challenge of content in specialists subjects like Mathematics, Physical Science and Accounting. Even the Provincial Department of Education currently relies on the expertise of the so-called Lead Educators to mediate challenging content to educators at content workshops. Lead Educators are carefully selected educators of merit who are backed by a track record of being top achievers and are highly qualified in their respective subjects.

The school has managed change well over the past five years not because change is well coordinated by the Department of Education but because the school is focused on superior performance.

The following extract from **MB** summarises how the school has dealt with curriculum changes over the past five years:

*"We have managed curriculum change very, very well because whether ... they are changes or not, we do not drop in our performance. If you go back as from 2008 we have been able to achieve 80%, in 2009 we achieved 84%, 2010 we achieved 90% and in 2011 we achieved 86% and throughout every change that takes place we are able to score above 80% because we embrace whatever change that comes and we sit down and we discuss what we need to do and how we need to change and how we need to introduce that change to our learners and make everybody embrace whatever*



*change is there in the curriculum so we don't have a problem at all with it instead we enjoy whatever change that comes because we are well able and motivated and inspired enough to embrace it because our goal is to ensure that whatever change but the curriculum must be implemented according to standards set".*

The last theme emerged from the challenges that school managers face when managing the curriculum.

#### **4.9 Theme 5: Barriers to effective curriculum management**

Despite the proactive management style of the principal and his school management team, there are challenges and barriers to effective curriculum management. The principal lamented lack of both material and human resources as a source of frustration and barrier to effective curriculum management. The school produces excellent mathematics and physical science results, but has no laboratory. The school offers consumer studies but has no kitchen and sewing room. The management of the case study school needs to be commended for their educator development programme.

Their key teachers are either under qualified or non-qualified but their curriculum development strategy which include developing junior educators through networking with lead educators and subject heads adequately bridges the training as evidenced by the following comments from the subject heads: *"Either you help the educator to go to the classroom or sometime he may invite you to go to the classroom"*.

While acknowledging the fact that educators are inadequately trained the principal alluded to the element that this is something the school can overcome. This is what he said about lack of resources and educator development:

*"They are barriers and in fact ... basically curriculum implementation and management is more about resources. If the resources are inadequate you can't do everything, like here we have ... we are doing very well in maths and science but we*

*don't have a science laboratory, in life science we don't have a life science laboratory or biology laboratory we do not have ... we have consumer studies but we do not have a kitchen and a sewing room so we really have a problem of the barriers become resources ... that's a basic thing, even if you have teachers and the other thing is the teachers themselves. You find that ... if teachers are inadequately trained to effect a change in curriculum ... then you struggle or if a teacher is inexperienced, you struggle but that one is not so much of a problem but it's the physical resource that becomes the serious problem because you can develop a teacher but what about physical resources you can't develop them, you can't find them overnight and have something that you need".*

The Head of Department faces the challenge of difficult educators, who need to be closely supervised, a load of administrative tasks are not related to teaching and learning. Another challenge is that the Head of Department carries a teaching load of key subjects on top of all the administration and management duties. He must set an example to his subordinates by producing quality results and complying with all the administrative requirements.

The Head of Department had this to say about the challenges he face:

*"Ja ... I think the major problem is the fact that we find it difficult to deal with some of the educators because some of the educators are very reluctant to attend the classes, which tends to actually give a lot of problems where we need to waste some time disciplining them and that actually affects even our task as managers because as departmental heads we still have an obligation to go to class and teach".*

The subject head has a challenge of being a manager without an official position. He finds himself having to approve or disapprove a fellow educator's work. This is not easy because he is in the same level with the other educators. His position is merely by virtue of his experience and expertise.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

In Chapter 4, data was analysed and presented using predetermined themes developed from interview data. In line with the phenomenological view, narratives from in depth interviews revealed participants opinions. The main objective was to allow the readers to reach their own conclusions as revealed by these narratives. Even though some of these narratives were edited for clarity and language, it was endeavoured to try to maintain the essence of what was conveyed by participants.

Since interview data is the main data collection strategy employed in this study, the interviews with the principal, Head of Department and subject head were transcribed, coded using predetermined themes and categories which enabled the researcher to identify emerging patterns. Data collected from the other two sources of a study of written documents and observation field notes were used to corroborate and support the interview extracts.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, data collected from interviews, document study and observation schedule was analysed. Themes that emerged from the interviews and minutes of meetings of the SMT were identified, named and discussed. In this, the final chapter, an overview of the study, summary of the results will be presented, followed by key findings that will be presented and discussed in relation to the research questions.

### **5.2 Overview of the study**

The aim of this study was to investigate how a selected academically successful rural secondary school leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change. The researcher chose a qualitative method following a case study design. This enabled the researcher to study curriculum management in a natural setting of a school. In addition, the researcher, as an experienced curriculum middle manager at school level, was able to offer valuable interpretations of notable observations in this setting. This could only be achieved by using qualitative methods that regards the researcher as a valuable research instrument.

The main research question that guided this inquiry was: How does a selected academically successful rural secondary school leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change? Sub-division of the main research question into the following sub-questions:

- What is the instructional leadership role of the principal?
- What is the curriculum management role if the SMT?
- How does school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management?
- How does the SMT ensure teachers' involvement in curriculum change?

Subsequently, the findings from data presented in Chapter 4 is presented in relation to the four sub-questions.

### 5.3 Summary of results

The following is an outline of the research results derived from data collected in this study:

- The principal is an instructional leader who relies on his leadership skills to clarify the mission and vision of the school. His skills are inter alia, effective communication, motivation, critical thinking and focus on goals. Since the vision of the school is ‘to encourage the love of teaching in both teachers and learners’, this assists him in informing and driving the school’s instructional programme.
- The principal and SMT rely on regular meetings as a tool for planning, organising, leading and controlling the school’s instructional programme. Regular meetings were found to be effective curriculum management tool. Effectiveness was measured by the extent to which such meetings have permeated the culture of the school and the fact that over a period of three years, out of 25 meetings held, all but one discussed curriculum and subjects. The cultural implication of these meetings was also evident in the observation recorded of the meetings of the SMT and department of Commerce that all educators come to these meetings fully prepared. Power relationships were noted. It was indicated that educators are active participants in departmental meetings who are not attending just for taking instructions.
- Curriculum managers fulfil different roles. There is a direct involvement of the principal, Heads of Department and subject heads in curriculum management *albeit* at different angles. While the principal has a view of the whole curriculum, he relies on the expertise of the Heads of Departments and subject heads in the hands on management of curriculum delivery.

- The principal uses innovative practices to enhance the capacity of the SMT. These innovative practices were identified as using subject experts from neighbouring schools, collaborating with schools exhibiting similar ethos to deliver the Mathematics curriculum, involving parents in supervising curriculum delivery, and empowering learners through a unique programme called 'pep talk'. Pep talk is a yearly project where the principal holds a one on one conversation with selected learners. These learners are selected from the high achievers, to encourage them and map their careers, and low achievers to uplift them and map their careers.
- The principal is a proactive leader who observes and takes ownership of curriculum changes. This assists the school in the management of curriculum changes and ensures that teachers are involved and connected to all the changes. There is evidence that reflection and collaboration are planned and scheduled by curriculum managers.
- Despite the proactive management of change by the school, the intervention of the Department of Education in matters of curriculum change is uninspiring.

## **5.4 Research findings in relation to the research questions**

Research findings from data collected from the research site and literature review are presented to answer the research questions.

### **5.4.1 What is the instructional leadership role of the principal?**

***Finding Number 1: The principal is responsible for casting the vision of the whole school***

Interview data and study of written documents revealed that the principal believes that his role is to drive the mission and vision of the school. The vision of the school is 'to encourage the love of teaching and learning in both teachers and learners'. This vision clearly places the curriculum at the pivotal role of everything the principal does. The principal stated in the

interview that the main reason that the school exists is to teach and curriculum is the centre of everything the school does.

To effectively drive the mission and vision of the school the principal professes a shift from management to leadership. Research results showed that the focus of the principal is in providing curriculum leadership. This is evident in that the principal articulates clear expectations and is the core resource provider and instructional resource and as such participates in curriculum delivery in the classroom. This is seen as a shift from management, which focuses on doing things right, to leadership that focuses on influencing how things are done.

This shift is in line with the literature study that revealed that the role of the instructional leader is now expounded to incorporate a shift from management to leadership (Doyle & Rice, 2002: 49). Doyle & Rice (2002: 50) refer to management as 'working in the system of administrative tasks' and leadership as 'working on the system'.

In this study, the principal clearly displayed a shift from traditional curriculum management to innovative curriculum management. Research results revealed innovative curriculum management that does not only relies on the management hierarchy but strengthens the capacity of the management structure by enlisting the services of senior teachers as subject heads, parents as supervisors and food handlers and professionals as facilitators and mentors. Literature review revealed that traditional curriculum management largely relies on the hierarchy and focuses on compliant management (Frame, 2003: 24). His instructional leadership style appears to be in line with the practical paradigm which according to Frame (2003: 28) 'prioritises the management of people and processes'.

This finding is in line with literature that revealed that curriculum should be managed in such a way that each school is a learning organisation in an organic and holistic sense (DoE, 2010: 13). Casting the vision of the whole school is crucial to managing the school as a unique learning organisation. Similarly, Andrews and Soder (1987) cited in Quinn (2002: 448) described the effective instructional leader as a principal performing at high levels in four areas; resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence in the

school. The term communicator is unpacked as someone who models commitment to school goals, articulates a vision towards instructional goals (Quinn, 2002: 448).

***Finding number 2: The principal influences curriculum delivery through empowerment***

Data collected from interviews and written documents revealed that the principal values and prioritises empowerment. The following empowerment tools were revealed:

- The principal creates a platform for deliberating curriculum matters by scheduling meetings where curriculum and subjects are discussed. Not only does he call meetings but also he empowers the Heads of Departments to do the same.
- Through these meetings where curriculum is deliberated on, the educators get the opportunity to engage with subject experts. Subject experts may be subject advisors who are invited by the school, neighbouring educators and professionals like publishers who are invited to mentor educators on lesson preparation, classroom management.
- The school has an extensive networking programme that involves neighbouring schools. Through these networks, best practices are shared.
- Empowerment is achieved through distributed leadership framework that does not only share leadership positions but turns the leadership hierarchy upside down. This is evident in the fact that the principal is a follower in departmental and subject meetings.
- Parents are empowered in that they participate in the drawing of the school's year plan and the school's camp activities as supervisors and food handlers.

Lighthouse school values empowerment through distributed leadership. In this school it was found a distributed leadership model similar to the one advocated by Spillane. In this school there are leaders without positions. They add capacity to the management team which suffered loss of a key position when the deputy principal's post was lost due to the downsizing of the school. The following extract from Spillane (2005) clarifies his perspective on distributed leadership:



The narrow focus on people with leadership positions is inadequate for three reasons:

- Some leaders in curriculum management are without positions, but lead by virtue of their knowledge.
- Leadership practice is not something done to followers but followers are one of the three elements of leadership.
- It is not the actions of individuals that is important but the interactions among them (Spillane, 2005: 145).

The effective use of subject heads by virtue of their knowledge, the fact that followers are given the opportunity to lead, and the use of regular meetings both as a planning tool and control tool exemplifies Lighthouse as true advocates of distributed leadership.

Curriculum management is the responsibility of the principal and his management team; their roles differ and complement one another. While the principal cast the vision for the whole school, the HOD's are the foot soldiers who take the vision to the battle arena, which is the classroom. If these roles are well coordinated, the principal can have time to lead the school and be innovative without compromising the management task of planning, organising, leading and control (Middlewood, 2003: 68).

***Finding number 3: The principal co-ordinates curriculum delivery through regular meetings***

The research results showed that the principal meets regularly with the SMT. Regular meetings feature prominently in all the three interviews. These meetings are conducted at three levels; the SMT level, the departmental level, and the subject level. Through these meetings, the principal is able to coordinate the curriculum, supervise the curriculum, monitor students' progress, and provides support in the use of data to drive instruction. Data in the form of control registers and records of feedback from class visits. This feedback is

used to inform the training needs of educators as well as to address gaps in instruction. These instructional leadership behaviours were also revealed by literature review that presented three models of instructional leadership (Murphy & Hallinger, Murphy's model, and Weber's model of instructional leadership).

Murphy and Hallinger (1985), cited in Henderson (2007: 35), provided a framework identifying three dimensions of instructional management; defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school climate. This framework was further refined by Murphy, cited in Henderson, to include a fourth dimension of developing a supportive work environment. Weber (1990) cited in Henderson (2007:37) identified five essential dimensions of instructional leadership; defining the school's mission, managing curriculum and instruction, promoting a positive learning climate, observing and improving instruction, and assessing the instructional programme.

Research results revealed that these models are consistent with the behaviour of the principal and SMT at Lighthouse school. These behaviours include the use of regular meetings to articulate the school's vision, promoting a positive learning climate through the support afforded to educators in matters of school discipline and observing and improving instruction through regular class visits and subsequent feedback provided to educators to inform their developmental needs.

***Finding number 4: The principal protects instructional time and increases learning opportunities***

The principal protects instructional time by supporting educators in matters of discipline. This ensures that learners are in class, timely, and ready to be taught. The principal also increases learning opportunities through co-ordinating morning classes, evening classes, weekend classes and camping.

Protection of instructional time and the increase of learning opportunities were among variables identified as curriculum management variables associated with better than expected student performance in South African schools.

These variables were collected from different studies as follows:

- The regulation of time (Fleisch & Christie, 2004). This refers to how principals spend their time. In a study conducted by Chisolm (2005) cited in Hoadley *et al.* (2009: 375), it is stated that the principal's time is largely consumed by administration activities. Contrary to this finding this study revealed that some administration duties for instance the registration of learners for external examinations, are delegated to Heads of Departments so that the principal is able to focus on leading curriculum delivery.
- The monitoring and support for planning delivery in relation to curriculum coverage (Gustafsson, 2005). Research results showed that planning, delivery and monitoring of curriculum coverage is a key role of both the principal and Heads of Departments.
- The procurement and management of books and stationery (Gustafsson, 2005). A study of written documents revealed that the procurement of books and stationery is a regular feature in both SMT and departmental meetings.
- The quality of tests and the monitoring of results (Taylor & Prinsloo, 2006). All these studies are cited in Hoadley *et al.* (2009: 375). Research results showed that the quality and monitoring of tests is effectively conducted by Heads of Departments and subject heads.

#### **5.4.1 What is the curriculum management role of the SMT?**

##### ***Finding number 5: Curriculum managers fulfil different roles***

There is direct involvement of the principal, Heads of Departments and subject heads in curriculum management, *albeit* at different angles. While the principal has a view of the whole curriculum, driving the purpose of the school, the heads of departments are involved in the management function of planning, organising, leading and controlling curriculum delivery. Research results showed that there is no confusion or disagreements about these roles. The Heads of Departments regarded themselves as planners, organisers, leaders and

controllers of the instructional programme. They also expected the principal to be an over viewer and resource provider in curriculum matters. Literature reveals that there is potentially role conflict for a curriculum middle manager. Sources of role conflict are unclear expectations and conflicting expectations (Coleman, 2003: 90). The absence of role conflict enhances the fulfilment of these roles.

In the review of literature, it was pointed out that any person undertaking curricula decisions, be it curriculum planners at policy level or curriculum managers at implementation level, is in fact curriculum theorising. This view is supported by the principal's response to the question: 'do you perceive curriculum management is your role?' Not only did the principal confirm ownership of curriculum management but he went further to say that he expects to be judged through the curriculum. His response reveals his meta-orientation that leans more towards the Tyler rationale. Tyler's (1949) rationale argues that there are four questions that curriculum workers have to ask (Marsh, 2004: 107,108):

- What educational goals should the school seek to attain?
- How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?
- How can learning experiences be organised for effective instruction?
- How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

The technical production perspective or Tyler rationale theme emerged from this extract and stuck out like a sore thumb on all the questions related to curriculum management roles. Both data collected from the principal and the HOD merged at this point to indicate that the school is strong on the Tyler rationale. The following evidence supports this finding:

- The principal used a factory metaphor to define his role as curriculum manager. He expressly stated that the school exists to teach and produce educated learners as an end product.
- Thus, it is important for the principal to ensure that a school is an efficient system where teachers teach and learners learn.

- Both the principal and HOD are creating a platform and deliberations associated with a design. The principal supports the educators by creating an enabling platform where they engage with subject experts.
- In all the interviews conducted with the curriculum managers it emerged that even though they all manage the curriculum, their roles differ.

In a study conducted by Dimmock & Wildly (1995: 307) in Western Australia, there is evidence that senior management has little direct impact in curriculum matters. Contrary to this claim, the research results revealed that the principal, who is a senior curriculum manager, has a direct impact in all matters of the curriculum. This direct involvement is evidenced by the fact that the principal views his role as that of combining both human and material resources to create a culture of teaching and learning and making everything else gets directed towards achieving that goal, where it is easy to teach and learn. Direct involvement is also revealed by the principal's behaviour of setting clear expectations in curriculum matters, maintaining firm discipline and protecting instructional time. Not only does he protect instructional time but he also creates extended learning opportunities.

#### **5.4.2 How does school organisation and culture contribute to effective curriculum management?**

##### ***Finding number 6: The capacity of the SMT needs to be enhanced beyond traditional curriculum management structure***

The size of the SMT is dependent upon the enrolment and staffing of the school. Lighthouse school has 422 learners, 14 educators, 2 HOD's and 1 principal. This means that the school's traditional management structure comprises of the principal and two HOD's. It would be challenging to manage the curriculum effectively with such a structure.

The school has enhanced the capacity of the SMT by strengthening it in the following areas:

- Appointment of subject heads.
- Enlisting the assistance of parents in curriculum supervision duties.

- Inviting subject specialists to conduct workshops in specialised areas like classroom management.

This finding is important for this study because one crucial aspect that emerged from the hearings on the streamlining of the curriculum was the school management's capacity to mediate the curriculum (DoE, 2009: 58). The school management's capacity to mediate the curriculum is compromised if traditional curriculum management structure is not substituted by an innovative structure that turns the hierarchy upside down as revealed by the distributed leadership framework utilised by the school.

### **5.4.3 How does the SMT ensure teachers' involvement in curriculum change?**

#### ***Finding number 7: School managers should observe and take ownership of curriculum changes***

The institutionalisation of curriculum changes is well guarded at Lighthouse school. It is well guarded in that firstly the principal is wary of complaining about curriculum changes and secondly, regards his role as to act as a catalyst for change. He states that he strives to make change friendly to teachers and teachers friendly to change.

The school manages curriculum change at four different levels. Firstly, curriculum is managed at the level of school governance, secondly, at the level of the SMT, thirdly, at the departmental level, and fourthly, at the level of individual subjects. At all these levels there is clear evidence in the form of minutes to the meetings where these changes were deliberated.

Evidence indicates that the school is responding to curriculum changes. The three stages of unfreezing, changing and refreezing identified by Chen in Wong (2007: 33) can be equated to the processes the school is undergoing to manage change. The school is currently somewhere between the unfreezing stage and the changing stage.

The unfreezing stage comprises of acceptance that the status quo should change and preparing human and material resources to adapt to change. In some cases, successful transition has been made from the old to the new (changing) in equipping teachers to deal with new content in the Mathematics curriculum.

The creation of a platform to deliberate curriculum changes at both the departmental and subject level is also evidence that the school is in the unfreezing stage. Some of the changes have already been implemented and the school is in the process of monitoring, motivation and promotion of new structures. The school is dealing effectively with the challenge of new content by appointing subject heads who have the mandate of conducting in house workshops to equip under-qualified and unqualified educators.

***Finding number 8: Reflections and collaboration needs to be planned and scheduled by curriculum managers***

0departments. It was interesting to note that the HOD's schedule report meetings from people who have attended the workshops. They also broker training if necessary by inviting professionals like publishers to address challenges. During these meetings, the implications of the workshop to curriculum delivery are discussed. This finding is in line with Wong (2007) who observed that even reflection and collaboration needs to be planned and scheduled by curriculum managers. The school has created a template that provides a guideline to the educators who need to report on workshops attended.

***Finding number 9: The intervention of the Department of Education in matters of curriculum change management is not well co-ordinated***

Although the principal believes that the school is coping well with the implementation of CAPS because learner achievement has not dropped since its implementation, the intervention of the Department of Education in matters of curriculum change management is not well co-ordinated.

The Department of Education intervenes through circulars that communicate policy changes and through workshops. Some circulars are reasoned at principals' meetings to ensure universal adoption. These pose no major challenges. Implementation workshops are a cause for concern for curriculum managers.

The principal complained about the quality of the CAPS implementation workshops. The department sometimes gives the initiative to conduct these workshops to the trade unions that appear to be ineffectively trained. As a result, many of the 2011 CAPS workshops were not

much of a success. It is claimed that in some cases one facilitator was chosen to facilitate two subjects, one of which he or she did not even teach. This resulted in the attendance dwindling.

The Departmental Head raised a valuable point about lack of training for curriculum managers. Educators are equipped for implementation through workshops. The HOD's receive second hand information from teachers who have attended the workshops. As a result, HOD's struggle to supervise curriculum implementation, because they are not well versed with the change. The school though, has an effective programme of brokering training to the rest of the educators who have not attended the workshops.

## **5.5 How does the SMT at Lighthouse school leads and manages the curriculum in an era of curriculum change?**

One of the aims of this study was to document the collective curriculum management functions of the SMT. Hence the choice of an academically successful rural secondary school was chosen because of the uneven state of curriculum delivery in our schools. This is based on a postulate that academically successful schools will provide rich case study evidence than poorly performing schools. Therefore, a number of leadership traits similar to those reported in the literature review were identified at the case study school. These traits are summarised and reported in Chapter 5.5.1.

### **5.5.1 The principal**

The principal is a proactive instructional leader whose main reason for existence is to drive the purpose of the school that is teaching and learning. He has opened effective channels of communication. He continually supports and empowers his subordinates. He facilitates a number of educational tasks and through regular meetings monitors the progress of the entire educational experience afforded to learners. He continually strengthens the capacity of the SMT by being proactive and consultative in order to drive the purpose of the school. The school enlists the assistance of parents to supervise camping activities, business people and managers to motivate learners and subject experts in matters of tuition.



This finding is in line with literature review in which Doyle & Rice (2002: 49) defines the role of the principal as an instructional leader as:

- One that focuses on instruction
- Building a community of learners
- Sharing decision-making
- Sustaining the basics
- Leveraging time
- Supporting ongoing professional development for all staff members
- Redirecting resources to support the school's multifaceted plan
- Creating a climate of integrity and continuous improvement.

Contrary to studies conducted by Shoba (2003) in which it was claimed that the SMT, particularly the principal, exhibited lack of knowledge in curriculum matters. In another conducted by Bush & Joubert (2004) in Gauteng, it was revealed that a large number of principals do not regard themselves as instructional leaders. Research results in this study revealed that the principal is a model instructional leader.

### **5.5.2 The HODs**

The HOD's are managers of the curriculum in the scientific sense of planning, organising, leading and control. These curriculum middle managers are one of the pillars in which a good curriculum management structure rests. These managers are responsible for the entire instructional programme of the school. Despite a number of barriers to effective curriculum management like a host of administrative duties and dealing with difficult educators, the HOD's are able to conduct an effective educator development programme.

This programme was created in an effort to address the shortcomings of the implementation workshops conducted by the department mainly that the HOD's are not work-shopped but receive second hand information from the educators who are the target of implementation workshops. This programme is pivotal to the success of the school. Research results revealed that most of the educators in this school are either under-qualified or unqualified. A

development programme is in place, which sees them bridging their training needs and ultimately surpassing even qualified educators in producing quality results.

This finding is in line with the literature review which described this position as intermediate between senior managers and class teacher (Coleman, 2003: 83). Everard and Morris (1990: 23) define a curriculum middle manager as ‘those teachers who have some responsibility for planning, organising, directing and controlling the work of other teachers’. Coleman (2003: 83) agrees with the above definitions and adds that while a curriculum middle manager is free of whole school responsibilities her or his responsibilities extend beyond the classroom.

### **5.5.3 The subject heads**

Subject heads are curriculum managers without official positions. They are appointed by virtue of their experience and expertise. The SMT’s capacity to mediate the curriculum is strengthened by the appointment of subject heads. They perform a number of managerial duties that inter alia include the moderation of assessment tasks, scheduling subject specific meetings and mentoring inexperienced educators.

The role of subject heads strengthens the capacity of the SMT and perfects the notion of distributed leadership. Literature review expounded distributed leadership to more than the sharing of leadership functions but to leadership practice in particular, as Spillane (2005: 145) inspiringly laments the narrow focus of distributed leadership to sharing of functions as inadequate because it disregards leaders without official positions such as subject heads.

Being a subject heads has its own challenges, as one subject heads commented, that it is difficult for them to command the respect of the educators because they are officially in the same rank. Their position though, requires them to analyse the work of their peers. Research results in this study revealed that the expertise and experience of subject heads is crucial to their success as subject heads.

#### **5.5.4 The School's organisation and culture**

The research results indicated that the principal has invested a lot of time in building an organised environment in which teaching and learning flourish. He boasts the fact that all role players at the school are working towards a vision, not towards him and therefore the school functions well even in his absence. An organised learning environment is in literature credited to successful distribution of leadership (DoE, 2009: 16). In schools where there is true distribution of leadership, systems and procedures are well entrenched and leadership functions have been shared so that the school functions well even in the principal's absence (DoE, 2009: 16).

Curriculum issues are discussed from the level of school governance right down to the level of the representative council of learners. Role players are roped in at all these stages as active participants in the planning and co-ordination of educational experiences for the learners.

#### **5.6 Conclusion**

This study presents an insight into how curriculum is managed in an academically successful rural secondary school. Its findings revealed that curriculum can be managed effectively. This can be achieved by shifting away from traditional curriculum management to innovative curriculum management. Traditional curriculum management depends on a hierarchical management structure. This structure hampers effective curriculum delivery because it fails to efficiently share expertise.

In an innovative curriculum management, the hierarchy is turned upside down by changing lines of communication and observing experience and expertise as vital resources to manage the curriculum.

This study was only limited to one case study school but It does contribute case study evidence both in the area of managing teaching and learning and educational leadership in general. It explores a concept of distributed leadership, a concept which is vital to effective educational leadership in general.

## **5.7 Suggestions for future research**

Although managing teaching and learning is one of the most important activities of principals and school leaders, there is a very limited research and literature in South Africa (Bush *et al.*, 2009: 01). The work of the principal in South Africa is not well-documented (Hoadley *et al.*, 2009: 375). Considering that a qualification for school principals has only been introduced in 2009, one might suggest that there is a great deal of scope for future research in this topic.

This study was conducted using the context of an academically successful school. Future studies might look at schools with different achievement levels to measure the success of the school in relation to effective curriculum management.

The notion of distributed leadership as pertaining to the sharing of leadership functions to people with official managerial positions is limiting the potential of school leaders. There is a great scope of research in the notion of distributed leadership. Future studies might investigate the experiences of senior teachers, without official management positions, that might enhance the capacity of schools to manage the curriculum effectively.

Lastly, there is great scope for future research in the area of curriculum development as a tool for educator empowerment. For instance in KZN, the provincial Department of Education has since 2011 enlisted the services of the so-called lead educators, a strategy to improve Matric results in certain subjects.

These lead educators are selected based on their success in consistently achieving not only 100% passes but also quality results in their subjects. Future studies might look at how these teachers can contribute to curriculum development projects for their respective districts or circuits.

## **5.8 Recommendations**

One of the key success factors at Lighthouse school is collaboration. Collaboration was identified as the key variable at all levels of management. The three departments function as independent units. As a result, they do not share best practices. If collaboration can be

strengthened among these departments, the successes of the mathematics programme can be easily transferred to other subjects. I recommend that collaboration be strengthened among departments in order to share best practices.

Research results revealed the leadership traits of the principal as outstanding. His focus on leadership traits such as communication, sharing decision-making and support for ongoing professional development, has enabled the school to build a sound school community.

Learners are not active participants in most curriculum decision making. I would like to see the principal utilising his leadership skills to build a community of learners that is self-regulated. I believe that this is achievable considering the success the school has on parental involvement. If the concept of empowerment can be extended to sharing curriculum decision with learners, then most of the learning opportunities that are only afforded to Grade 12 can be extended to the whole school.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. 2007: Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theory and methods. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson. Boston.

Buchanan, M.T. 2008. Curriculum Management: Connecting the whole person. *Proquest Education Journals*.vol.82, nos 41-45.

Bush, T & Hysteck, J, 2006. School Leadership and Management in South Africa: principals' perception. *International Studies in Education Administration*. Vol 34(2), nos 63-76.

Bush, T. *et al.* 2009. Managing Teaching and Learning in South Africa. *International Studies in Education Development*. Article in press. Doi: 10.1016.15

Carl, A. 2005. The “voice of the teacher “ in Curriculum Development: a voice crying in the wilderness? *South African Journal of Education*. Vol 25(4), 223-228.

Christie. P. 1999. OBE and Unfolding policy: Lessons to be learned. *Curriculum from plans to practice*. Reader. Gultig, J. Hoadley, U. & Jansen, J. Oxford University Press. Cape Town.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2007: Research in Education. Routledge. New York

Coleman, M. 2003. The Role of Curriculum Middle Managers. In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.

Covey, S. 1989. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Simon & Schuster. New York

Department of Education. 2000. A South African Curriculum for the Twenty First Century: Report of the review committee. *Curriculum from plans to practice*. Reader. Gultig, J. Hoadley, U. & Jansen, J. Oxford University Press. Cape Town.

Department of Education. 2008. Lead and Manage a Subject, Learning area or Phase: Advanced Certificate in School Management and Leadership. DoE. Pretoria.

Department of Education. 2009. Report of the Review Task Team for the Review of the Implementation of the NCS. DoE. Pretoria.

Department of Education. 2010. Lead and Manage a Subject, Learning area or Phase. [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za) date of download 3/10/2012

Dhlamini, M. C. 2008. The Instructional Leadership Role of the School principal in the Improvement of the Quality of Education: A Case Study. Thesis (M.ed). University of South Africa. Retrieved on 5/7/2012 From [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za).

Dimmock, C. & Wildy, H. 1995. Conceptualising curriculum management in an effective secondary school: A Western Australian case study. *Curriculum journal*, Vol6:3, 297-323.

Doll, W. 1989. Foundations for post-modern Curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. Vol.21,no.3, 243-253

Doyle, M. E. & Rice, D. M. 2002. A Model for Instructional Leadership: principal Leadership. *Proquest Education Journals*. Nov 2002 Vol3, 3 page 49-52

Education Labour Relations Council. 2004. A Policy Handbook for Educators. Government Press. Pretoria.

Edwards, G. B. 2006. Absent Leadership in Curriculum Implementation. Thesis (M.ed). University of Johannesburg. Retrieved on 05/07/2012 from [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za).

Equal Education Trust. 2010. Funding for Public Schools. [www.equaleducation.org.za](http://www.equaleducation.org.za). Date of download 07-05-2013

Everard, K.B., Morris, G. 1990. Effective School Management. Paul Chapman. London. UK.

Frame, J. 2003. Theorising Curriculum. In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.

Fullan, M. 2007. *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Teachers College Press. New York.

Frere, P. 1996. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New Revised Edition. Penguin Books. New York.

Goodson, I.F. 1994. *Studying Curriculum*. Teachers College Press. New York.

Graczewski, C. , Knudson, J. and Holtzman, D. J.(2009) 'Instructional Leadership in Practice: What Does It Look Like, and What Influence Does It Have?', *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*.(JESPAR), 14: 1, 72-96.

Graham~Jolly, M. 2003. The Nature of Curriculum Change Management. . In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.

Harley, K & Wedekind, V. 2004. *Political Change, Curriculum Change and Social Transformation: South African Education in Context*. Reader. Unisa Press. Pretoria

Henderson, N. P. 2007. Teacher and principal Perception of Effective Instructional Leadership: an exploration of guiding practice and personal beliefs. Thesis (D.ed). University of Texas at San Antonio. Proquest Information and Learning Company .

Hoadley, U. 2007. Managing Curriculum and Instruction in South African Secondary Schools. In: Paper Presented at the Teacher Development and Institutional change in an Evolving Education Context Conference, Kopanong, May.

Hoadley, U. Christie, P. and Ward, C. L.(2009) 'Managing to learn: instructional leadership in South African secondary schools', *School Leadership & Management*, 29: 4, 373 — 389

Jansen, J. D. 1998. Curriculum Reforms in South Africa: a critical analysis of OBE. *Cambridge Journal of Education*. Vol 28, no3,

Jansen, J. D. 2003. On the Politics of Policy: State and Curriculum after apartheid. . In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.



Jansen,J & Middlewood,D. 2003. From Policy to Action: Issues of Curriculum Management At School Level. In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.

Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. 2004: Educational Research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Pearson. Boston.

Kinney, P. 2009. Instructional Practices. Proquest Education Journals. Vol 9 no7 page 48.

Labane, N. 2009. *Planning and Managing Curriculum Implementation in Rural Schools*. Thesis (M.ed). Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Retrieved on 05-05-2011 from [www.nmmu.ac.za](http://www.nmmu.ac.za).

Lee, J. C. & Dimmock, C. 1995. Curriculum Leadership and Management in Secondary School: A Hong Kong Case Study. *School Leadership and Management*. Proquest Education Journal Vov 19 no 4. Pp 455-481

Leedy, P. & Ormrod, J. E. 2005. *Practical Research: planning & design*. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson. New Jersey.

Macmillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. 2006. *Research in Education: evidence-based enquiry*. Sixth edition. Pearson. Boston.

Makhathini, A. B. 2010. SMT Workshop Presentation Document.

Marsh, C. J. 2003. *Key Concepts for Understanding Curriculum*. The Falmer Press. London.

Marsh C.J. & Willis. 2007. Curriculum:alternative approaches,ongoing issues 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River. New Jersey

Mason, J. 2002. Qualitative Researching 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Sage Publications. London

MCLAughlin, M. W. 2005. Listening and Learning from the Field: tales from policy implementation and situated practices. In *The Roots of Educational change*. Lieberman, A. (editor). Springer. Dordrecht.

Middlewood,D. 2003. The Role of Senior Curriculum Managers. In *Managing the Curriculum in South African Schools*. Coleman, M. Graham-Jolly, and Middlewood D.(editors). Commonwealth Secretariat. London.

Ministry of Basic Education. 2010. *The Delivery Agreement for the Basic Education Sector*. Retrieved on 29-12-2010 from [www.doe.gov.za](http://www.doe.gov.za).

Ministry of Basic Education. 2010. *Statement by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, MP on the Progress of The Review of the National Curriculum statement, Tuesday 06 July 2010*. Retrieved on 04 September 2011 from [www.doe.gov.za](http://www.doe.gov.za).

Moloi, K.C. 2007. An Overview of Education Management in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education* 27 (3). 463 – 476.

"NCS spells doom for our schools." *Pretoria News* [South Africa] 17 Nov. 2008: 11. *Custom Newspapers South Africa*. Web. 3 June 2011

Niewenhuis, J. 2007. Analysing qualitative data. In *First Steps in Research*. Maree, K.(editor). Van Schaik. Pretoria.

Ornstein, A.C. & Hunkins, F.P. 2004. Curriculum-foundations,principles, and issues 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Pearson. Boston.

Posner, G. 2002. Models of Curriculum Planning. *Curriculum from plans to practice*. Reader. Gultig, J. Hoadley, U. & Jansen, J. Oxford University Press. Cape Town.

Quinn, D.M. 2002. The impact of principal leadership behaviours on instructional practice and student engagement. *Journal of Educational Administration*. Vol40 no.5. 2002. Pp447-467.

Sayed, Y. 2000. Democratising Education in a Decentralised System : South African Policy and Practice. *Compare* 32, no. 1: 35-46

Sello, M. E. 2009. The Role of School Managers in Managing Change in Mogodumo Region, in Limpopo Province. A Case Study. Thesis(M.ed). University of South Africa. Retrieved on 5/7/2012 From [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za).

Senge,P. The five disciplines of a Learning Organosation.1994. Creating People-centred schools-school organisation and change in South Africa. Gultig,J. Ndhlovu,T & Bertram,C.(editors). SAIDE Oxford.Cape Town

Shoba M. E. *The Role of School Management Team in Curriculum Management: a case study*. Thesis. (M.ed). University of Kwazulu-Natal. Retrieved on 05-05-2011 from research space. ukzn.ac.za/xmlui/handle.

Stenhouse, L. 2002. A Process Model of Curriculum. *Curriculum from plans to practice*. Reader. Gultig, J. Hoadley, U. & Jansen, J. Oxford University Press. Cape Town.

Spillane, J.P. (2005) Distributed Leadership. *The Eduational Forum*. Vol69:2;143-150

Tam, A. C. F. (2010) 'Understanding the leadership qualities of a head of department coping with curriculum changes in a Hong Kong secondary school', *School Leadership & Management*, 30: 4, 367 — 386

Taylor, N. 2007. Equity, efficiency and the development of South African schools. *In International handbook of school effectiveness and improvement*, ed. T. Townsend, 523. Dordrecht: Springer. [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov) Date of download 28-03-2013

Taylor, A., Mickens, R., Bell, R., Brown, G., Westfield, R., Thomas, D., Smith, C., Smith, W. 1991. Summertime. Produced by Hula and K. Fingers. Da-Rosse Production,

## 6 Annexure A: Permission to conduct research in the KZN DoE institutions.



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Tel: 033 341 8610

Ref.:2/4/8/386

Mr Vusumuzi Praisegod Khumalo  
P. O. Box 429  
ULUNDI  
3838

Dear Mr Khumalo

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct a pilot and research entitled: **THE SCHOOL AS A CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SITE IN AN ERA OF CURRICULUM CHANGE**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 April 2013 to 30 April 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in the Zululand District of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education.

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD  
Head of Department: Education

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa

PHYSICAL: Office G25, 188 Pietermaritz Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 3418610 Fax : 033 341 8612

EMAIL ADDRESS: [sibusiso.alwar@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:sibusiso.alwar@kzndoe.gov.za); CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;

WEBSITE: [www.kzndoe.gov.za](http://www.kzndoe.gov.za)

...dedicated to service and performance  
beyond the call of duty

## 7 Annexure B: Letter of Consent to the principal

P.O. Box 429

Ulundi

3838

20 June 2013

Dear Principal

### **Request for Participation in a Research Project**

I am currently conducting a study as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education Degree at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof. Taole. My student number is 786 067 6. The topic of my study is “The School as a Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.”

This study aims to document how curriculum is managed at our schools. Your school has been chosen for this purpose based on improvements that have been noticed on your matric results over the past few years.

Kindly grant me permission to conduct this research at your school.

The research will seek the participation of the principal and members of the School Management Team through interviews and observation of meetings. These interviews will be no longer than 50 minutes each. I will also request access to specified school documents such as registers and records of minutes of meetings.

Deliberate actions will be taken to ensure that all the information gathered will be used only for this study and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the confidentiality of the school as well as the participants. Participation is on a voluntary basis and participants may withdraw from the study at any time.

For more information you may contact me at 072 1181 239 or email at [titanovp@webmail.co.za](mailto:titanovp@webmail.co.za). You may contact my supervisor Prof. M J Taole at [taolemj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:taolemj@unisa.ac.za) or at 012-4293541.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated

Yours Sincerely

V P Khumalo

Declaration

I.....principal

Understands that

- The information gathered in this study will be treated as strictly confidential.
- The name of the school will not be disclosed.
- The names of the participants will not be disclosed
- The school may withdraw from the study if it so wishes at any time.
- The results of this study will be made available on request.

I therefore give consent to Vusumuzi Praisegod Khumalo to conduct research at our school and consent as a participant in this study.

Signed.....at.....  
on.....2014

Co-signed by Researcher.....

## 8 Annexure C: Letter of Consent to the Departmental Head

P.O. Box 429

Ulundi

3838

20 June 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Letter of Consent for Participant**

I am currently conducting a study as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education Degree at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof. Taole. My student number is 786 067 6. The topic of my study is “The School as a Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.”

This study aims to document how curriculum is managed at our schools. As a member of the School Management Team you are requested to participate in this study.

I promise that all the information gathered will be used for this study and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the school and the participants. Participation is on a voluntary basis and you may withdraw from the study at any time, should you wish to do so. Your participation will require that you participate in an interview which will not exceed 50 minutes, provide the researcher with specified documents relevant to curriculum management and that you may engage casually with the researcher until the study is finalised. The results of this study will be made available to you on request.

For more information you may contact me at 072 1181 239 or email at [titanovp@webmail.co.za](mailto:titanovp@webmail.co.za). You may contact my supervisor Prof. M. J. Taole at [taolemj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:taolemj@unisa.ac.za) or at 012-4293541.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated

Yours Sincerely

Mr V P Khumalo

Declaration

I.....  
.....

Understands that:-

- The information gathered in this study will be treated as strictly confidential.
- An audio recorder will be used to capture the interviews
- The name of the school will not be disclosed.
- My name will not be disclosed
- I may withdraw from the study at any time, should I wish to do so.
- The results of this study will be made available on request.

I therefore give consent to Vusumuzi Praisegod Khumalo as a participant in his research.

Signed.....at.....  
.on.....

Co-signed by Researcher.....



## **9 Annexure D: Letter of consent to the subject head**

P.O. Box 429

Ulundi

3838

20 June 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Letter of Consent for Participant**

I am currently conducting a study as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education Degree at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof. Taole. My student number is 786 067 6. The topic of my study is “The School as a Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.” This study aims to document how curriculum is managed at our schools. As a senior teacher tasked with managing your subject you are requested to participate in this study.

I promise that all the information gathered will be used for this study and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the school and the participants. Participation is on a voluntary basis and you may withdraw from the study at any time, should you wish to do so. Your participation will require that you participate in an interview which will not exceed 50 minutes, provide the researcher with specified documents relevant to curriculum management and that you may engage casually with the researcher until the study is finalised. The results of this study will be made available to you on request. For more information you may contact me at 072 1181 239 or email at [titanovp@webmail.co.za](mailto:titanovp@webmail.co.za). My contact supervisor may be contacted, Prof. M J Taole at [taolemj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:taolemj@unisa.ac.za) or at 012-4293541.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated

Yours Sincerely

Mr V P Khumalo

Declaration

I.....  
.....

Understands that-:

- The information gathered in this study will be treated as strictly confidential.
- An audio recorder will be used to capture the interviews
- The name of the school will not be disclosed.
- My name will not be disclosed
- I may withdraw from the study at any time, should I wish to do so.
- The results of this study will be made available on request.

I therefore give consent to Vusumuzi Praisegod Khumalo as a participant in his research.

Signed.....at.....  
.on.....

Co-signed by Researcher.....

## **10 Annexure E: Interview Guide for the principal**

**Researcher: Khumalo V P**

**Student Number: 786 067 6**

**Project: The School as Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.**

### **Part 1: Biographical Questions**

- 1.1 What is your name?
- 1.2 How old are you?
- 1.3 What is your position at this educational institution?
- 1.4 How long have you held this position?
- 1.5 What is your academic qualification?
- 1.6 What is your professional qualification?
- 1.7 Have you attended any workshops on curriculum management?.
- 1.8 If yes, who organised the workshop?

### **Part 2: Research Questions**

- 2.1 As the principal of the school, what do you perceive is your role as an instructional leader?
- 2.2 Which functions or activities do you think the principal should embark on to fulfil the role of an instructional leader?
- 2.3 What do you think the principal should do in order to have an effective curriculum management structure at school?
- 2.4 As the principal of the school how do you enforce academic standards?
- 2.5. How does teaching and learning proceeds in your absence?
- 2.6 As the principal of the school discuss your role in developing an appropriate organisation culture at your school?
- 2.7 What kind of support is afforded to both educators and learners to enable them to manage the curriculum effectively?
- 2.8 As the principal of the school, do you perceive that curriculum management is your role?
- 2.9 As the principal of the school what do you perceive is your role in managing curriculum change?
- 2.10 Do you have a platform where planned change is discussed and enacted?
- 2.11 How has the school managed curriculum change over the past three years?

2.12 Have you made or proposed any changes to school structures as a result of curriculum change?

2.13. In your opinion, does the school receive adequate support from the Provincial Department of Education with regards to managing change?

2.14 Are there any barriers you have noted, that hinder curriculum management at school level?

## **11 Annexure F: Interview Guide for Departmental heads**

**Researcher: Khumalo V P**

**Student Number: 786 067 6**

**Project: The School as Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.**

### **Part 1: Biographical Questions**

1.9 What is your name?

1.10 How old are you?

1.11 What is your position at this educational institution?

1.12 How long have you held this position?

1.13 What is your academic qualification?

1.14 What is your professional qualification?

1.15 Have you attended any workshops on curriculum management?.

1.16 If yes, who organised the workshop?

### **Part 2: Research Questions**

4.1 As a departmental head, what do you do to manage the instructional programme of your department?

4.2 Does your department set its own academic standards?

4.3 As a departmental head do you receive support from the principal in teaching and learning?

4.4 As a departmental head discuss your role in developing an appropriate culture at your department.

4.5 What structures do you use in your department in order to manage the curriculum effectively?

4.6 As a departmental head, what do you perceive is your major role within the school?

4.7. How do you plan for effective teaching and learning in your school?

4.8 What are some of the challenges you encounter in fulfilling your role as curriculum manager?

4.9 As a departmental head of the school what do you perceive is your role in the Management of curriculum change?

4.10 How are curriculum changes communicated to the staff in your department?

4.11 Do you receive support from anyone in ensuring that your department understands and adapts to curriculum changes?

4.12 Has your department made or proposed changes to its structures in response to curriculum change?

4.13 How would you rate the extent of your knowledge about the curriculum?

## **12 Annexure G: Interview guide for subject heads**

**Researcher: Khumalo V P**

**Student Number: 786 067 6**

**Project: The School as Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change.**

### **Part 1: Biographical Questions**

- 1.17 What is your name?
- 1.18 How old are you?
- 1.19 What is your position at this educational institution?
- 1.20 How long have you held this position?
- 1.21 What is your academic qualification?
- 1.22 What is your professional qualification?
- 1.23 Have you attended any workshops on curriculum management?.
- 1.24 If yes, who organised the workshop?

### **Part 2 : Research Questions**

- 2.1 As a subject Head, discuss your role in the management of curriculum delivery with regards to your subject.
- 2.2 As a subject head, how does your role kink up with that of the departmental head in the management of curriculum delivery?
- 2.3 As a subject head, what kind of support do you afford to both educators and learners in your department?
- 2.4 As a subject head, how do you manage subject specific curriculum changes?
- 2.5 What are some of the challenges you experience in your role as subject head?

### 13 Annexure H: Observation Tool

Date.....

Focus Area	Record of observation	Comments
How was the meeting Communicated?		
Who called the meeting?		
How are the participants prepared for the meeting?		
How do power relationships play out during the meeting?		
What is the agenda?		
Are there any interruptions? IF yes, How are they managed?		



How does the chairperson engage the participants?		
What is the leadership style of the Chairperson?		
How was time managed during the meeting?		
What are the cultural implications in this meeting?		

## **14 Annexure I: Interview Transcript - principal**

**Date: 06 December 2013**

**Place : Lighthouse School (Pseudonym)**

**Participant: The principal, MB (pseudonym)**

Researcher: First, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Vusi Khumalo, I am conducting a study as a requirement for a Master's Degree at the University of South Africa. The name or topic of my study is "The School as a curriculum management site, in an era of curriculum change". So the focus of the study is how school managers Eer.. interpret Eer.. and lead curriculum at school level. I will also like to state on record that the study is conducted on a confidential basis ...Eer.. even the name of the school will not be disclosed, we will use pseudo names instead, even your name as a participant will not be disclosed but the results of the study will be available for dissemination Eer.. from the department and I will also make a copy available to the school when the project is finished. I would like to thank you MB for affording me this opportunity to pursue this project. And our interview will take approximately 30 minutes, and its divided into two, there is one part where I ask you biographical questions...questions of a personal nature and the section two I ask you research questions. Shall we begin?

MB: Yes

Researcher: First of all can you please introduce yourself.

MB: Eer.. I Am MB, the principal of Lighthouse school.

Researcher: Thank You Sir, How old are you?

MB: forty five years.

Researcher: I am: Thank you ..Eer What are your professional qualifications?

MB: I did SSTD, Senior Secondary Teacher's Diploma together with a B Paed degree at the university of Zululand, then I proceeded to do a BA honours degree with Unisa focusing on Linguistics and, I also enrolled for a Masters degree with the University of Stellenbosch and I completed in 2004.

Researcher: Thank you. What is your position at this educational institution?

MB: I am the principal.

Researcher: How long have you held this position?

MB: This is the fifth year.

Researcher: Have you attended any workshops focusing solely on curriculum management?

MB: Yes

Researcher: If yes, Who organised the workshop?

MB: They are organised basically by the department of education..using subject advisors who are from the district and people who are in the curriculum section in the province.

Researcher: Thank you, I am now gonna proceed to the research questions. As the principal of the school what do you perceive is your role as an instructional leader?

MB: My role basically is leadership.. that is what I believe in. I believe in leadership even more than management. Because as a leader I cast the vision I make everybody see what needs to be done. In that way I build a strong team of educators who know what needs to be accomplished. My role basically is to make clear the vision, the mission and inspire people, motivate people to accomplish what is set as a vision of the school.

Researcher: Which functions of activities do you think the principal should embark on to fulfill the role of an instructional leader?

MB: the roles are.. that I pay more attention to is to lead.. to give direction..to motivate,to inspire to keep and to create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning both

for educators and the learners but if you are not working because in my opinion even if you have all these administrative tools in place but if you are not working the individuals..the people then you fail ,the school's results might not improve even if you think it should because what you are focusing on are the instruments, administrative measures but the people when they are not in the mood and when they are not in the atmosphere that allows them to do their best, then they fail to do their best and the school does not improve.

Researcher: Thank you, What do you think the principal should do in order to have an effective curriculum management structure at school?

MB:Eer... An effective curriculum management at school is basically eer getting informed hods or senior educators people who have a better experience in that subject and who know the requirements that are required in order to get the learners passing and excelling and if you have such people then..you...you..you empower them to do the work..to make eer..to be free..to come up with suggestions to be free to communicate with teachers to call meetings on their own and to let the curriculum have a place where it is discussed eer..where it becomes the main agenda of discussion not only staff meetings where we discuss a whole lot of matters but to create a platform where people discuss that which pertains to curriculum and subjects and at times I do call meetings myself and become part where we talk about the curriculum we talk about the subjects with those teachers concerned and that's where you get to see where you are driving your vehicle to if there are eer things that are not right on the way you diagnose very them quickly if you do that but if you don't call those meetings then you don't make space for a dialogue about the curriculum then eer.. curriculum improvement becomes such a huge impossible task.

Researcher: Thank you. As the principal of the school how do you enforce academic standards?

MB: Err academic standards are basically coming from the department to say that these are the requirements for a pass for this or for that and for a good leader you always want to excel to do littlke bit above average eer where instead of a forty percent and when we do internal exams we put a fifty and say let us strive for fifty percent because we know if our minimum is fifty percent then we teach and encourage our learners to do better and that is what keeps the standards high instead of letting the standard so low to work only on the minimum

requirement but I focus on the maximum requirements not on the minimum requirements because if you focus on the maximum requirements you pull everybody even the lowest learner up and the teachers work even harder to attain the standards and that is how the standard of education and academic standard at school is maintained and enforced and helping you to do better and excel.

Researcher: Thank you. How does teaching and learning proceeds in your absence?

MB: Eer...That's a very good question most principals eer are so concerned with controlling and monitoring and that's what makes teaching not to proceed when they are not there but I believe in empowerment and I believe in leadership where you empower people and inspire people and let people work towards a vision not towards you. There is a saying that says if an institution or an organisation is great because of you, it is not great. Its great.. It must be great whether you are there or not as a leader, that means you have built capacity for leadership you have built capacity for these people to be independent and to do what they need to do without anybody behind them, because if they do things only when you are there you haven't achieved a goal. When you die or are in hospital then the school dysfunctions in a day but as for me I can be away from a school the whole day... a week but I will find the school operating normally and excelling because everybody knows what needs to be done and everybody has bought into the vision of what we are doing as a school so when I am there the school runs smoothly but even when I am not there again the school runs smoothly again, that is what makes me happy.

Researcher: Thank you. As the principal of the school discuss your role in developing an appropriate organisation culture at your school?

MB: Thank you. Eer..as I have said it starts..it all starts with a vision a clear vision, a clear mission and the goals set and creating an environment a conducive environment with all parties involved talking to the parents, the SMT, the teachers, the learners, the representative council of learners all these people must know what is expected of them, what makes a good school. So you create a culture by making everybody know what is a good or a normal school and make everybody see and be able to compare themselves and see if they are doing below, standard or above standard and so we all strive to create a culture of teaching and a culture of learning and make everything else directed..gets directed towards achieving that goal where

its easy to teach, its easy to learn and everybody enjoys that atmosphere, is free from any threats..Eerr..when you involve everybody the atmosphere can be free from any threats because everbody who comes close to the institution knows what is expected..what is done there and even the outsiders begin to respect eer..what we are doing at school because they can see that these are people with a direction, these are people with a vision, these are people who know what they are doing and so the culture of the school is very good by now and by the time when I started as a principal the culture was not really that good. Learners were so unruly and so ill disciplined and late coming was just normal and by now they are no late comers and pupils, learners abide by the school rules and they are no problems actually and that is what makes teaching easy for teachers. They teach with ease, they don't struggle because they do not struggle with much of discipline, they only get to class and deliver the matter and they enjoy the interaction between themselves and their children. This is the culture that is conducive for teaching and learning and this is what makes the school runs smoothly.

Reseacher: Thank you. What kind of support is afforded to both educators and learners to enable them to manage the curriculum effectively?

MB: Eer..for educators basically..Errrm the workshops done..conducted by..Eerr.. the subject advisors is the..is the...is the available tool and resource that helps our teachers and clusters, school clusters..local teachers clustered together..when they come together and discuss issues that pertain to certain subjects they get empowered. Those are the things..that is the support that we have in fact if it were not for that support I think we would not be achieving what we are achieving because this makes teachers gets used to each other so they know the teacher who is best in the subject who is excelling so when it's about to be exam time we also double check whether our learners are ready by bringing those teachers who are good in those subjects to assess our learners and to see where they are weak so that they may be further prepared for the examination. And for learners we..we really eerm... take them to schools eer.. where they are good teachers or invite those teachers to come to our school. That is the support that we give to our learners and ensure that if they complain and say that we feel that we are not thoroughly prepared for the examination, we do something to ensure that they go into the examination with very high level of confidence, knowing that they are going to do well. That's what we do.

Researcher: Thank you. As the principal of the school, do you perceive that curriculum management is your role?

MB: Exacly. You..the school..eerm..the main reason that the school exists is to teach and so you cant separate curriculum from this mission. Curriculum is the centre of everything so they is no need for the principal if the school is going to underperform. There is no need for any..any position if the school is ghoing to underperform so eerm the basic reason why the school exists is to teach so curriculum is my first and foremost responsibility if..if nothing goes well with the curriculum then nothing goes well with everything in the school so that's..that's what I consider to be my central role. I am happy when only and I can be judged through the curriculum and I am happy when the curriculum is eerm..is well undertaken and when everybody, teachers and learners know what to do and they do what they are supposed to do and when the exam comes they pass and that is what its all about because the future of the learners we are teaching depends on the implementation of the curriculum and that's what at the end of the day must be...they must be taught ,learned and come out of the institution empowered through learning to be something better in life.

Researcher: Thank you. As the principal of the school what do you perceive is your role in managing curriculum change?

MB: Curriculum change is what we live with these days. They are constant changes, now and again, now and again but my role basically is to make those changes welcome to the educators. It is not to come screaming about it saying here they are new changes again and they are frustrating us this and that. Is to make the change something very friendly to teachers and teachers friendly to any change that comes because the ultimate goal is to implement this very curriculum because learners will definitely be assessed according to this curriculum requirements and standards that are set by the department. So in managing curriculum change mine is to ensure that we sit down with the educators and talk about it and put flesh on it and make everybody buy into the vision of that change and see how we implement that change and help one another to implement that change and not to grumbe or complain about it but welcome it and embrace it because that is what we are all about. We are about curriculum implementation at school.

Researcher: Thank you. You have actually covered my next question which was: Do you have a platform where planned change is discussed and enacted? That has been covered so I am going to ask the next one. How has the school managed curriculum change over the past three years?

MB: We have managed curriculum change very, very well because whether eer.. they are changes or not we do not drop in our performance. If you go back as from 2008 we have been able to achieve 80%, in 2009 we achieved eer..eerr.. 84%, 2010 we achieved 90% and in 2011 we achieved 86% and throughout every change that takes place we..we are able to score above 80% because we embrace whatever change that comes and we sit down and we discuss what we need to do and how we need to change and how we need to introduce that change to our learners and make everybody embrace whatever change is there in the curriculum so we don't have a problem at all with it instead we enjoy whatever change that comes because we are well able and..and motivated and inspired enough to embrace it because our goal is to ensure that whatever change but the curriculum must be implemented according to standards set .

Researcher: Thanks. Have you made or proposed any changes to school structures as a result of curriculum change?

MB: Eerr...Yes of course, because of curriculum change at times you..you..you change the structures that are there in order for the structures to be suitable for the implementation of the changes that are there. So you can't remain with the same structures if they is a change that's coming it demands that you change also the structures you see to it that the structures that are in place are well able to ensure that the changes that are there are effected correctly.

Researcher: Thank you. In your opinion, does the school receive adequate support from the Provincial Department of Education with regards to managing change?

MB; Eerm...I don't think we really get enough support. Like in the issue of Errm.. CAPS now..the department gave the responsibility to people who were inadequately trained to



take..to workshop teachers on CAPS and..and they were inadequately trained themselves and that's why the workshops were not so much of a success and because ...in fact union and union leaders took the initiative to introduce CAPS and that is where it all went wrong and I think if the department does things.. if they introduce change they do things like this then we will always have a problem but if people whoa are knowledgeable and skilled in whatever change come then it's easy for teachers to get what they are supposed to get and embrace whatever change because at the end of the day whatever change, if we do not get enough support that change does not become effective.

Researcher: Thank you, and in conclusion are there any barriers you have noted, that hinder curriculum management at school level?

MB: Eer...they are barriers and in fact..err..basically eerm curriculum implementation and management is more about resources. If the resources are inadequate you can't do everything, like here we have..we are doing very well in maths and science but we don't have a science laboratory, in life science we don't have a life science laboratory or biology laboratory..eerr.. we do not have..eer.. we have consumer studies but we do not have a kitchen and a sowing room so we..we.. really have a problem of the barriers become resources...that's a basic thing, even if you have teachers and the other thing is the teachers themselves..you find that eer..if teachers are inadequately trained to..to..to effect a change in curriculum eer.. then you struggle..there you struggle or if a teacher is inexperienced, you struggle but that one is not so much of a problem but it's the physical resource that becomes the serious problem because you can develop a teacher but what about physical resources you can't develop them, you can't find them overnight and have something that you need.

Researcher: Thank You **MB**. That concludes our interview, I would like to thank you very much for the wealth of knowledge that you have imparted to this project.

## 15 Annexure J: Interview Transcript for HOD

Date: 07 August 2013

Interviewee: Departmental Head of Lighthouse School

Place: Lighthouse School

Researcher: Right, we may begin. Good afternoon Sir.

Dilligent: Good afternoon.

Researcher: My name is Vusi Khumalo. I'm conducting a study for a Master's degree at the University of South Africa. The topic of my project is "The School as a Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change." I'm here to conduct interviews with education managers at this institution. The interview is gonna be divided into type..two types of questions. The first one will be biographical questions, where I will be asking questions of a personal nature and the second type will be research questions. The interview normally lasts for less than thirty minutes, for all the pilot studies that I have conducted, it has never exceeded thirty minutes and I would like to state on record that the study ic conducted confidentially, the name of the school is kept confidentially- we use pseudo-names instead and the names of the participants is also kept confidential. Also in response to these questions, what the study seeks is just the experiences of educators so there are no correct or incorrect answers. I am gonna start with biographical questions. What is your name, Sir?

Dilligent. OK. I am **Dilligent** (pseudonym)

Researcher: How old are you?

Dilligent: I am thirty years.

Researcher: What is your highest academic qualification?

Dilligent: I have a Bed honours in education management, Post-graduate certificate in education and national diploma in accounting.

Researcher: Thank you. What is your position at this educational institution?

Dilligent: I am the head of department.

Researcher: How long have you held this position?

Dilligent: I think it's from 2009. Nhuu... it's four years now.

Researcher: Four years. Have you attended any workshops on curriculum management?

Dilligent: Mhuuu...Not really..but I have attended a workshop which covered part of that. It was not mainly intended for curriculum management.

Researcher : But, curriculum management was included as...

Dilligent: Ja, it was just included as part of the workshop.

Researcher: Who organised the workshop?

Dilligent: It was the circuit management.

Researcher: Thank you. Now we gonna proceed to research questions. The first question. As a departmental head, what do you do to manage the instructional programme of your department?

Dilligent: Can you repeat the question?

Researcher: AS a departmental head, what do you do to manage the instructional programme of your department?

Dilligent: mhhh..We start by calling the meeting for all the educators of the department, where we set a programme, in particular...where we set dates for submitting files.. dates for submitting their daily prep and to remind them about eerr... their tasks, what is expected of them... and to give them sort of workshops on particular subjects and ensure that at the end of the day they indeed know what is expected from them as educators and to remind the about observing their teaching periods and to ensure that those who are not observing their

teaching periods are reminded and disciplined accordingly as it is expected and ensure that they know the dates for submitting their files and to check the learner's files and to do the class visits particularly surprise class visits because I don't have to always indicate to them that I will be visiting because they will not be prepared about because I wanted to know what are they actually doing, even if they is no person who is going to come in and supervise them or visit them to see what is actually happening.

Researcher: Thank you. Does your department set its own academic standards?

Dilligent. Eerr..not really. We use the standards that are actually set by the department because it starts from the Nation...from the National to the Province and from the Province to the Districts then to the Circuits then it goes down to the schools therefore we do have targets or standards that are in line with the standards of the school of what is expected from the school.

Researcher: Thank You. As a departmental head do you receive support from the principal in teaching and learning?

Dilligent: Yes I do. Eerr Yes I can say that yes I do because even if I am experiencing problems with a teacher I just simply report it to the principal, even if we have a problem with school discipline with the learners we report to the principal and then we receive full support from him.

Researcher: Thank you. As a departmental head discuss your role in developing an appropriate culture at your department.

Dilligent: Come Again.

Researcher: As a departmental head discuss your role in developing an appropriate culture at your department.

Dilligent:. OK. Ja. As a head of department I ensure that my educators who are serving under my department are well developed in order to be able to offer a professional service eerr.. and

I am..we always have regular meetings where we discuss the problems that they experience usually on each and every week we have a meeting where we review the previous week and looking forward to what is expected and we also address the problems that are being experienced by the educators and we also report. I also take reports from the educators on how far they are with their scope because as a head of department I believe that I am the one responsible for ensuring that the educators are in line with the pace setter and to ensure that at the end of the day I assist those who are actually behind their pace setters for whatever reasons that have been stated and I motivate them and encourage them to organise some extra classes to ensure that at the end of the day they cover the work that is actually expected for that particular period so I believe that those are the meetings that actually help us in ensuring that we maintain the culture of teaching and learning because even if the educator is having a problem he is welcome to report that to me and as a head of department I need to ensure that I assist the educator by all means in order to ensure that the problem is solved and that he can be able to proceed with his or her task.

Researcher: Thank you. What structures do you use in your department in order to manage the curriculum effectively?

Dilligent.: Ja, in our department, as we have actually...if I can say we have four..four four learning subjects which is Accounting, Economics, Business studies as well as Economic and Management Sciences. I ensure that amongst the educators of my department, I appoint a subject heads, who are going to monitor, who are going to work closely with those educators in particular those who are inexperienced to assist them and to ensure that they are working towards..or their work is actually..they are doing what is actually expected of them and to check whether the written work is enough..check whether are they given homeworks, in order to check the standards of the papers before I come in as a head of the department to check that the work is actually being done by the educators and I also ensure that as a head of department if we have a mentor for the department who is assisting in terms of discipline because you can find that even if the educator is experienced but most of them are experiencing the problem of disciplining the learners. Therefore I ensure that we appoint a mentor who is going to assist in that particular aspect. And I ensure that as the head of department I keep on organising workshops for..for..for developing the educators in various aspects in particular say..in classroom management, we organise a facilitator who is going to ensure that we assist the educators to develop them about those particular areas. Thank you.

Researcher. Thanks. As a departmental head, what do you perceive is your major role within the school?

Dilligent.: Ja, Eem, I think my major role is to ensure that the school functions very well..I actually supervise if I am not in class I ensure that I supervise around the school to check the learners who are outside the school and to check that all the educators have actually attended.. or have actually went to the classes and to ensure that those who are nor actually in classes..I check and find out the reason why they are not actually in classes and to actually also to motivate those who are not in the classes and just to monitor around the school to ensure that they is no noise and all the educators are doing what is expected from them in the class because you can find that the educator is in the class but is not teaching as is actually expected. Therefore, that is I believe..that is what I normally do.

Researcher. Thank You. How do you plan for effective teaching and learning in your school?

Dilligent.: (clears his throat). As we usually have an SMT meeting that's where we start with the planning. Where we ensure that all the instruments for monitoring the curriculum are in place..say for an example there is a time table for educators to go..which actually allows them..which they use to go to the classroom and we ensure that there is a relief time table for those educators who..who might happen that they are not at school, therefore we need to ensure that there is an educator who comes in for her or his position. Eer..we also ensure the fact that..there is a..there is a time table also for the SMT to ensure that they monitor around the school. Ja..I think that's what we do.

Researcher. Thank you. What are some of the challenges you encounter in fulfilling your role as curriculum manager?

Dilligent.: Ja..I think the major problem is the fact that we find it difficult to deal with some of the educators because some of the educators are very reluctant to attend the classes, which tends to actually give a lot of problems where we need to waste some time disciplining them and that actually affects even our task as managers because as departmental heads we still have an obligation to go to class and teach, therefore we find ourselves disciplining an educator who is not actually attending hisorher class, and the challenge that I believe we are

experiencing the most is....is the...is the number of administrative tasks that we need to perform which are not in line with..with teaching and learning because sometimes you find that we need to do registration for grade 12 learners though which actually resulted in a fact that as an educator I can't go to class maybe for two days dealing with that ; which actually give me problems to..to..my...in terms of not in fact finding myself in line with the pacesetter and that actually resulted in a fact that being busy with the administrative task you end up not monitoring the educators because in most cases the educators want to be monitored at all times; because then I am busy with that administrative task, I end up not monitoring the educators then the educators tend to do things on their own ways, not teaching the learners and you find that at a later stage educators are not doing what is expected which actually tends to even affect discipline to the learners because if the learners are not receiving education in a proper manner they tend to be very ill disciplined, have a lot of cases that you will end up dealing with and you end up even failing to monitor or to control the task of the educators if you are busy with a lot of administrative tasks; so I believe that actually affects a lot in terms of managing the curriculum.

Researcher: Thank you. As a departmental head of the school what do you perceive is your role in the Management of curriculum change?

Dilligent.: Ja, I believe that as the departmental heads, we need to ensure that when there is a curriculum change we need to ensure that we are the ones well versed with the change that is expected rather than being developed or workshoped by your subordinates. But what I think is becoming a problem is that when there is a curriculum change that is about to be implemented, we are not actually being invited as managers to come and attend some workshops where we will be developed about that particular change but they keep on...or they just call the educators who are your subordinates to be developed or workshoped about the curriculum where you find that at the end of the day the people who are well versed with the curriculum change are the educators of which you as a manager need to manage them which tends to be very difficult for the departmental heads to monitor the task of the learners which result to the fact that the implementation of the curriculum doesn't in fact go as it is expected.

Researcher: Thank you. How are curriculum changes communicated to the staff in your department?

Dilligent.: Eer..we make sure that we usually call a workshop or sort of a meeting. Where the person who have been able to attend or who is well versed with...who actually have enough information about...comes and facilitate such workshop to the educators so that the educators will be able to know about that particular change which is about to be implemented.

Researcher: Thank you. Do you receive support from anyone in ensuring that your department understands and adapts to curriculum changes?

Dilligent.: Come again? ....Can u pause?

Dilligent.: OK..

Researcher: May we proceed?...we were interrupted on the question..Do you receive support from anyone in ensuring that your department understands and adapts to curriculum changes?

Dilligent: Yes, I can say that...I can say yes because we receive support from the subject advisors....if I am experiencing any problems..I can phone the subject advisors to ask even for assistance, when I am experiencing problems they even also come and visit us in our school where they actually check the work of the educators and receive support from the principal because if we are experiencing problems and from the circuit management we also receive support because if we are asking support to say, for an example from the principal, if he can't give the support he tries by all means to get somebody who can come in and assist us on that particular problem.

Researcher: Thank you. Has your department made or proposed changes to its structures in response to curriculum change?

Dilligent.: Eeh...Not really that there has actually proposed any changes but what I can say is that they challenge some of the aspects of the curriculum but not necessary formally imposing a particular change but they give some suggestions but we tend to ignore that as managers because we feel that it is not in our power in fact to propose any change in the curriculum.

Researcher: thank you. And lastly, how would you rate the extent of your knowledge about the curriculum?



Dilligent.: Mhhuu...I cas say its adequate because eeh..they are lots of things that we need to learn in particular as our curriculum changes from time to time and eeh....even if the curriculum is implemented there are a lot of things that tend to change from time to time and I can jusyt say its adequate.

Researcher: Thank you [Dilligent](#), that concludes our interview. I would like to thank you for a wealth of knowledge that you have contributed to this project.

Dilligent: Thank you very much.

## **16 Annexure K: Interview Transcript for subject heads**

Date: 5 September 2013

Interviewee: subject heads for Mathematics – Lighthouse School (Pseudonym)

Place : Ulundi Library

Researcher: Let me first start by introducing myself, My name is Vusi Khumalo, I'am conducting a study for the...for a Master's Degree at the University of South Africa. The topic of my study is "The School as a Curriculum Management Site in an Era of Curriculum Change". I'm here to conduct interviews with relevant people, who are involved in the management of the curriculum. You have been selected to participate in this study by virtue of your role as a subject head for mathematics. My..the interview is divided into two type of questions. First I'll ask you biographical questions and then the research questions. Shall we start with biographical questions?

Africa.: Yes

Researcher: Thank you. What's your name Sir?

Africa.: My name is [Africa \(Pseudonym\)](#).

Researcher: How old are you?

Africa.: I'm thirty five years.

Researcher: What is your highest academic qualification?

Africa: I'm having...Academic I have got Bsc Agricultural Science and professional I have ACE in Mathematics.

Researcher: How long have you been at this educational institution?

Africa.: From 2006, up to date. That is about seven years.

Researcher: What is your position at this educational institution?

Africa.: At the moment I'm teaching grade 12 mathematics, 11 mathematics and grade 8. I'm also the subject head for mathematics.

Researcher: Ok. Have you attended any workshops on curriculum management?

Africa: Eerr..since there have been a lot of changes in the curriculum..on the introduction of the NCS we were attending workshops on generics, how to manage the relevant changes..how to cope with them.. and then CAPS also we have a lot of workshops trying to sort out the changes in the syllabus.

Researcher: Thank you. Now we gonna start with the research questions. As a subject Head, discuss your role in the management of curriculum delivery with regards to your subject.

Africa: As a subject head the role is based on the experience...we were selected based on the experience in the subject. So...normally like mathematician..like mathematics subject head we normally help the junior educators or the other teachers who are..let me say..those in grade 10..those who are below us to guide them in delivering the subject. For instance the new educators who are from the Universities or tertiary institutions..sometimes they come and during the teaching sometimes they tend to teach the textbook rather than the policy document. So what we usually do we rather guide them as to what they must teach

specifically not the textbook per se but what is the limitations and what you have to..to..just that we guide them to deliver according to the National Curriculum statement.

Researcher: I see, thank you. As a subject head, how does your role link up with that of the departmental head in the management of curriculum delivery?

Africa: Like I said, at first, the subject head..the head of the department normally..like in our school he is the head of mathematics, physical science, life sciences, that means all the sciences so the HOD may not be having all the aspects of these sciences. So what we normally do..like me as a mathematics.. I normally guide the HOD so that in terms of mathematics everything in terms of the curriculum is well monitored for an example when the educator sets questions you try to monitor that all the levels..you look at the taxonomy..Blooms taxonomy..level 1 questions..level 2..level 3 and level 5 questions..you try to see that the educator setting the questions has balanced the paper, he don't just set level 1 questions or all level 5 questions. You guide the educator..you check before it goes to the subject head..or..to the head of department.

Researcher: Thank you. As a subject head, what kind of support do you afford to both educators and learners in your department?

Africa: Ja..What we usually do is that we call the subject meetings so that the educators..we try to see where they may have some problems, maybe you can realize that the educator is very good in one area and another one is not very good in that area so in that case we try to negotiate something we call it err..something like link..or networking..there is the term..networking so that the educator who is in grade 10 maybe I'm in grade 11 but this educator is not well versed with the certain topic or is having a problem..either you help the educator to go to the classroom or sometime he may invite you to go to the classroom. In terms of the learners also, if the teacher give them assignment we are all welcome to help the learner because in the rural areas you find that if they go home they do not have uncles or brothers who might help them but in the school we also guide them on that parental role so that they can easily come to you in terms of the assignment.

Researcher: Thank You. As a subject head, how do you manage subject specific curriculum changes?

Africa: Ja, like I said, previously if you take something like mathematics, in the NCS there were some topics which are now in CAPS, which were not in the NCS. So these are specifically to.. so what we do is we normally take this policy document compare what are the new changes in this new curriculum that we are having and then the previous one so that in terms of delivery we don't deliver the old ones and leave out the new ones. So that we can do all these changes..like I'm saying the teacher may have been teaching the old one , he is not good on the new one so we normally do this try to guide each other in terms of subject specific.

Researcher: Thank you Sir. What are some of the challenges you experience in your role as subject head?

Africa: Ja..sometimes some educators.. maybe the educator has set these questions..like in our school the policy is you must set your question paper about a week before they write the paper. Sometimes you realize that the educator may not submit the question paper earlier. Maybe they are writing the paper the following day but he just submit it to you knowing err..knowing..in that case he just wants you to approve the paper. So you may go to the paper and say no..this thing has not been done well so sometimes try to explain to the educator..go and do these changes , they take it as if it is something like witch-hunting or you are trying to tarnish them ..so sometimes you have to get a very good way of explaining to the educator. Moreover you may..sometime you take the lesson plans and others of the educator and try to see if everything is well covered..you see that the teacher has..maybe the same topic the teacher has just introduced the topic maybe they are just some specifics that he didn't mention and you try to convince the educator that no this thing is supposed to be done in this way or you have left this or this thing was not supposed to be teach..taught..the educators normally may find it difficult to accommodate such...these are some of the weaknesses..the challenges to this task.

Researcher: Thank you, Africa. You have made a valuable contribution to this study.

Africa: You are welcome.